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Daily Report

Latin America

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NOTICE TO READERS: An * indicates material not disseminated in electronic form.

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El Salvador

The Mexico City news agency NOTIMEX reported on 2 March that the truce between the Armed Forces and the FMLN was allegedly broken by "bloody clashes." A subsequent item relates that Copefra denies any such incident. AFP says that ONUSAL observers "reported absolute normalcy."

Haiti

In an interview given to LE MONDE, ousted President Aristide stated as a precondition for his return to Port-au-Prince "the arrest of Gen. Cedras pending his trial" or failing that, "his departure from the country." LE MONDE also reports that Prime Minister-Designate Rene Theodore would apparently agree to Gen. Cedras remaining at his post in the framework of a "Chilean-style" experiment.

Cuba

The Madrid news agency EFE carries a report on statements made by Cuban Vice Foreign Minister Raul Roa Kouri regarding his country's trade relations. Roa praised the decision by three Spanish autonomous regions to develop trade ties with Cuba, calling it "a gesture we expected from a country to which we are bound by deep ties of cooperation and friendship." Roa did, however, express his regret that "Cuba does not have the same allies as in the past." He denied that the island had become isolated, saying, "We have relations with more countries now than in the early years of the revolution, when all of them except Mexico severed their ties due to pressure from Washington."

Cuba

Roa Kouri on 'Adverse Effect' of Market Economy

FL0303032892 Havana Radio Rebelde Network
in Spanish 0000 GMT 3 Mar 92

[Text] Raul Roa Kouri, head of the Cuban delegation before the UN Human Rights Commission, denounced today the adverse effect on millions of people in the world of the new world order, which is based on the market economy. When speaking on the point on the agenda related to children's rights, Roa Kouri specified that the reality of the Southern Hemisphere countries has been portrayed before the commission in a sugar-coated image and in accordance with Eurocentrist stereotypes.

The Cuban diplomat pointed out that these societies seem to ignore that the world is living in a complete fantasy, which is confusing and blinding, and they do not pay attention to anything except their hot dog and detergent commercials.

Roa Kouri made his point by stressing that in the five weeks that the commission has been meeting, more than 1.2 million children have died in the world due to malnutrition and endemic illnesses. He added that just last year, more than 13 million children died due to hunger and sickness, most of them from underdeveloped countries.

Roa Kouri Comments on Trade With Spain, CIS

PA0303015592 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1715 GMT
2 Mar 92

[Text] Geneva, 2 Mar (EFE)—Cuban Vice Foreign Minister Raul Roa said on 2 March that the attitude expressed by three Spanish autonomous regions in forming new commercial links with Cuba "is a gesture we expected from a country to which we are bound by deep ties of cooperation and friendship."

Roa told EFE in Geneva on 2 March, "What is at stake in Cuba is defense to the death of our sovereignty and independence, not just a government. We expect the solidarity of friendly countries like Spain during the difficult period we are experiencing."

"Galicia, Asturias, and Canarias showed interest and imagination in seeking formulas to facilitate the resumption of trade of mutual interest, which during the sixties and seventies enabled Spain to export 2 million tons of nougats and \$5 million in wine, trucks, spare parts, and vessels that otherwise could not be exchanged in more competitive markets," he said.

"We would like to see the Spanish Government retain the same open attitude of these regions and be ready to explore nontraditional formulas so Spanish-Cuban trade can be mutually beneficial," he noted.

The vice minister expressed regret that Cuba does not have the same allies as in the past. "But we are not isolated because we have relations with more countries now than in the early years of the revolution, when all of them except Mexico severed their ties due to pressure from Washington."

Latin America and most African and Asian countries, as well as most Eastern European and CIS (Community of Independent States) countries, have diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Roa said the recently signed commercial agreements with the new CIS and the Baltic republics will ensure trade continuity. He said there are still difficulties in reaching an agreement with Russia, as that country wants to continue the sugar-for-oil exchange system using market prices only, something Cuba opposes.

"We cannot expect to replace overnight the type of exchange we used for years, and which we are both interested in maintaining, since we are the only country that can supply the almost 4 million tons of sugar Russia needs for its internal consumption (Cuba produces almost six million tons per year)," he explained.

"We still cannot conduct trade on the basis of market prices, because for over 20 years sugar and oil were advantageously linked for the two of us. There were times when Cuba made purchases above the market price and Moscow did likewise," the vice foreign minister said.

Roa admitted, however, commercial relations with the former socialist countries can no longer be as before and must be based on reciprocal interest. "But we are not ready to sell sugar at famine prices," he concluded.

Havana Notes 'Embarrassing Defeat' of U.S.

FL0303033192 Havana Radio Rebelde Network
in Spanish 0000 GMT 3 Mar 92

[Text] The dirty politics of the United States against Cuba before the UN Human Rights Commission today suffered a crushing defeat during a vote to determine the representation of experts in the commission on minorities. The United States could not influence the vote because it was conducted in secret. This allowed Cuban expert Miguel Alfonso Martinez to obtain 35 votes, which was nine more than the amount required to win. Martinez thus became the first specialist reelected to the UN Human Rights Commission meeting in Geneva. The United States was a strong opponent of the Cuban representative and his renomination to the group that fights discrimination and helps protect minorities.

Delegates consulted said the vote illustrates two basic points: The first is the falsehood of one of the elements of the U.S. anti-Cuban campaign; in other words, the alleged isolation of our country. The second is the fact that when the representatives at the commission can

express themselves freely or through secret votes, the U.S. objectives suffer the most embarrassing defeats.

U.S. Efforts To Reinforce 'Blockade' Viewed

PA0203180792 Havana Radio Havana Cuba
in Spanish 1330 GMT 2 Mar 92

[Roberto Morejon Commentary]

[Text] The Mexican daily EL FINANCIERO noted in a recent article that different agencies within the Bush administration persecute and keep an eye on all activities foreign businessmen conduct with Cuba.

As journalist Carlos Facio stated, the object of these maneuvers corresponds to Washington's determination to reinforce the economic blockade against Cuba to drown the island economically and cause the revolution to fall.

The executive branch's attempts run parallel to proposals by such legislators as Senator Connie Mack and [Congressman] Robert Torricelli, who look to strengthen the blockade by adopting various conditions such as prohibiting business with Cuba by all U.S. subsidiary companies in third countries.

The White House does not ignore the careful negotiations between Cuban authorities and foreign investors, negotiations aimed at starting new joint ventures whose profits are to be shared in ways that will not harm Cuban sovereignty.

EL FINANCIERO stressed that the U.S. campaign against foreign investment intensified as a result of the Communist Party's Fourth Congress, when it was agreed to recommend that the government facilitate the creation of mixed businesses and other commercial agreements.

Potential business partners interested in providing capital, markets, technology, and experience soon arrived in Cuba. This interest must surely correspond to Cuba's possibility of offering its idle production capacity, qualified labor, and the chance of recovering initial investments in a few years.

With the prospect of attractive mutual advantages ahead, the first partnerships have already under way in the areas of telecommunications, oil exploration, the marine platform, and tourism, the pioneer in these matters.

The possibility that Cuba may acquire resources for its survival and development in this manner, and the acceptance by other countries of Cuba's partnership offer, has made the U.S. Government multiply its efforts to avoid the fruition of all such contact.

Cuban negotiators have to be clever and discreet to make all U.S. maneuvers fail.

Station Notes Special Period's Effect on Industry

FL0203214692 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba
Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 29 Feb 92

["Focus" commentary]

[Text] The special period has been changing the work in the provinces into a culture of local determination based on the search for solutions to the people's daily problems. Many of the current difficulties, which result from a lack of resources, have found encouraging alternatives as a result of higher initiative and creative efforts, which within the established guidelines and policies are based on the implementation of a greater decentralization to find solutions with the resources available at each workplace.

Although some provinces are also working in this direction, as is the case in our capital, there is no doubt that complex peculiarities are confronted since the problems' magnitude makes it more difficult to achieve these goals. But as the times in which we live become more difficult, this outlook demonstrates that we have a reservoir of potential with which to confront these problems if we accomplish the development of the ideas that will make it possible to overcome the current, forced shortages caused by the double foreign embargo to which we are subjected.

In some provinces, certain fields of the service sector used these measures to achieved better results than in normal times. Thus we have the conviction that amid these adversities we can implement efficient concepts of economic management, assured by making various mechanisms more flexible; a greater margin of decision-making in management structures all the way to the grass-root level; and therefore a greater demand on individual responsibility.

These experiences are very important. In this era of collapse and intense crises, where the consequence of the shock therapies of neoliberal models is true social trauma in many countries of the region, the Cuban special period is a clear example that a political process, even when faced with exceptional circumstances like those which threaten our nation, can only be saved if it has real public support and if the people are completely willing to take all the risks. But also if there is a complete willingness to search for ways to overcome any adverse situation. However, to resist the growing onslaughts of hostility from the United States and the uncertainty of relations with those who up to yesterday were our most important allies does not mean to become accustomed to resignation.

The special period does not constitute conformity or the adoption of defeatist ideas of living in communal primitivism. On the contrary, it is a way of confronting and responding to a truly exceptional situation, combining survival efforts with the will to never renounce doing

whatever is necessary for development. That is the only way to overcome the uncommon trials imposed from abroad.

First, the country has real motivation to work toward economic recovery and reactivation of productivity in the short and middle terms. One of the essential springboards to achieve this is to gradually introduce changes in internal organization and in management and administrative techniques.

Second, because we will not be able to resume our lives as before once this period has ended, perhaps we have not fully realized how this special moment in which we are living has modified our view of rationality and efficiency. Many examples of this become evident everyday. It is very unlikely that we will again coexist with the high incidence of paternalism, the material production hampered by bureaucracy and overinflated staffs, the wasteful consumption of resources, the importer mentality, and other mediocre practices of the economic sector. The correction of these practices started with the ideological and political counteroffensive, inspired by Fidel, that began the process of rectification.

The transformation of the country requires new dynamics and internal logic, because the efforts and sacrifices of the special period have not done anything more than to intensify the criteria and decisions toward the determination to consummate more and more our own ideas to immediately achieve resource capabilities and work toward economic independence strategies.

Third, because our difficulties are great, we cannot take refuge in brooding as a society. We will not emerge from these difficult times by complaining or folding our arms. Neither shortcomings nor waiting for specific instructions for everything justify any inaction that might at the local level interfere with the introduction of new management ideas that promote the ability to create and innovate with what we have to make our daily lives easier.

[Words indistinct] the special period [words indistinct] by our own measures, because no one is going to give us anything for free. We must and should come out of this sooner rather than later, but only through the desire to work harder and better and by doing away with preestablished schemes and rigid practices of abstract and obsolete norms that block innovative paths.

ANPP President on Constitutional Amendments

FL0303022492 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 3 Mar 92

[Text] Juan Escalona Reguera, president of the National Assembly of the Peoples Government [ANPP], has concluded a five-province visit that allowed him to verify the development of the experience of the peoples councils and study the constitutional modifications being formulated by each region. In Guantanamo Province,

the ANPP president observed several local solutions to problems affecting the community and the economy.

Regarding the proposed amendments to the Cuban Constitution, Escalona Reguera announced that beginning in April, the National Assembly deputies will examine the final text that includes the changes suggested for approval during the next period of sessions of the National Assembly.

[Begin Escalona recording] The proposed modifications are an attempt to address the accords adopted by the Fourth Communist Party of Cuba Congress and other parts of our Constitution that definitely needed to be reformulated: the issues of religion and discrimination. In addition, the issue of property needs to be addressed, because we must also create and make room for a judicial base for the investment of foreign capital in the joint enterprises that the country is establishing as a form of development. Today it is tourism, but it is not only tourism. Other joint enterprise investment alternatives are appearing, and it is the National Assembly's duty to create a judicial base to protect these investments and make it possible to solve the problems that we are facing today.

We are, of course, not going to write a new constitution or anything like that. We are going to amend the current one. We are going to adapt it to the concepts expressed in the Fourth Congress and await for the country to leave behind the special period before thinking about modifications of a different nature. [end recording]

Delegation Signs Trade Protocols With Iran

FL0303002592 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2232 GMT 2 Mar 92

[Text] Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, president of the Islamic Republic of Iran, has met with a Cuban delegation that held trade talks in Tehran. Hashemi-Rafsanjani met with Ernesto Melendez Bachs, the minister president of the State Committee for Economic Cooperation of Cuba, who is leading the Cuban delegation that has been visiting Iran since 23 February.

During the visit, the Cuba-Iran Joint Intergovernmental Commission signed several cooperation protocols including the health, sugar, trade, fishing, and agricultural spheres. The Cuban delegation also met with political and economic authorities of the Islamic Republic and confirmed the exchange of economic information.

Jorge Lezcano Perez on Agricultural, Food Plan

FL0203201392 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 2 Mar 92

[Text] With the assessment meeting of the Union of Young Communists [UJC] in Havana City, the preliminary process throughout the country for the Sixth UJC Congress scheduled for the first part of April was concluded. During the meeting, which was attended by 517 delegates and guests, a delegation of 254 members was

approved to represent the capital at the congress, and Central Committee member Teresita Garcia Moruarte was ratified as first secretary in Havana City.

The delegates debated political and ideological work, emphasizing the need to strengthen work at the grass-roots levels. In that sense, they stressed that there is a surplus of arguments and accomplishments of the revolution to explain the defense of the nation and socialism.

During the analysis of the economy, the participants stressed the youth's work in pharmaceuticals, radiology, tourism, and defense, as well as in the food program, where the youth are increasingly more involved. Jorge Lezcano Perez, first secretary of the Communist Party of Cuba in Havana City, discussed the matter with the delegates.

[Begin Lezcano recording] For the peak periods of March and April, we should mobilize to "inar del Rio no fewer than 20,000 technology students who are not needed—to which we should add 4,000—for the tobacco harvest. That means that in March and April, no fewer than 24,000 workers, students from the capital, should be working in the food program of the sister province of Havana.

Despite the skeptics, in spite of them, results can already be seen in the food program. I say in all honesty that Havana, our capital, must be prepared. It is getting prepared, of course. Right? We must be seriously prepared to receive the fruits of these programs during these months.

There is the challenge of collection. Collection departments face a tremendous challenge regarding packaging and transportation. We cannot let what they say will happen happen—not a single product will be lost in the fields. That would really be a crime. Collection departments in Havana City Province, in Havana Province, all those that participate in this program, know that they must work at a maximum level so that does not happen.

This month we should receive more than 1 million quintals of produce, and in April we should receive more than 1.5 million quintals of produce. [end recording]

During the assessment meeting, the youth of the UJC in the capital reported that they already have more than 7 million pesos for the funding of the UJC congress.

* Tourist Centers To Support Local Food Supply 92P40131A

[Editorial Report] Havana TRABAJADORES in Spanish of 17 February 1992 reports on page 8 that approximately 120 tourist centers and industries, including the Neptune-Triton Complex, the El Comodoro Hotel, Biocaribe, and the Osito Fruit Preserve Factory, are part of a program to improve food services in Havana City. According to Rolando Fernandez Tamarrit, secretary general of the Commerce and Gastronomy Union in the capital, tourist centers donate "food

byproducts normally thrown away" and utensils which are in good condition but which cannot be used in tourist centers because they do not meet the required standard of quality. For example, the article explains that the Neptune Hotel has donated pork and fish byproducts, chicken giblets, and fruit peels, as well as cleaning and cooking utensils and tableware to the El Museo cafeteria on Fifth Avenue and 72nd Street. Cafeteria workers have used the food donations to make broths, stews, and cold drinks.

Antigua and Barbuda

Parliament Opens With Annual Throne Speech

FL0203151792 Bridgetown CANA in English
1409 GMT 1 Mar 92

[Text] St John's, Antigua, March 1, CANA—The Antigua and Barbuda Government says it will be placing emphasis on "matters which directly affect the economic and social well-being" of the country.

Governor General Sir Wilfred Jacobs gave the position in the traditional Throne Speech, to open the fourth session of the current Parliament on Thursday.

Sir Wilfred said Antigua and Barbuda "has only scarce human and financial resources to deploy in pursuit of its diplomatic objectives ... and this fact dictates that my government will concentrate its diplomatic efforts on matters which directly affect (our) economic and social well-being".

He said the "government is fully cognizant that there are structural weaknesses in our economy. Our public debt is high; its servicing is a severe burden to further economic growth.

"Our economy is not ideally balanced; there is too heavy a reliance on our tourist sector, and we must search for ways to diversify.

"Bearing in mind that our people are our greatest assets; we must find ways to broaden their vocational and technical skills, and thereby introduce them into the mainstream of our economic growth," Sir Wilfred said.

On the international scene, he said the government "welcomes the changes in the former Soviet Union which have brought into existence new states".

"We look forward to being able to recognise and establish diplomatic relation with the emerging nations of the Commonwealth of Independent States in the near future." Antigua and Barbuda and the former Soviet Union had diplomatic relations at the non-ambassadorial level.

The Antiguan Government said that it "remains unequivocally committed to regionalism and will participate fully in the decision-making councils of both (the) OECS (Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States) and Caricom (Caribbean Community).

"Both these organisations have an important year ahead, when vital decisions regarding the future of regionalism will be taken," Sir Wilfred added.

He said "a major concern of (the) government is the fact that development assistance flows to the (developing countries) from the developed countries and international donor institutions...have slowed down considerably.

"My government's policy is to endeavour to persuade donor countries and agencies that other indices of development than GNP per capita should be employed to assess the development levels of small states such as Antigua and Barbuda," Sir Wilfred stated.

He said St John's notes 1992 as "a year of significance in world affairs ... because it signals the creation of the single market among European Community states".

"My government will therefore continue to support the banana-growing countries of the OECS in their efforts to retain their traditional banana market.

"My government recognises the contribution of the European Community to Antigua and Barbuda, and with this in mind, intends to join with other OECS states in establishing a joint diplomatic mission in Brussels later this year."

Sir Wilfred said the government "is committed to working for a successful resolution" with regard to the United States Government ... contemplated closure of the U.S. Embassy here and the removal of the visa section to Barbados.

Haiti

Aristide Gives 'Version' of Washington Agreement

PM0203145292 Paris LE MONDE in French
1-2 Mar 92 p 4

[Report on interview with deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide by Martine Jacot in Geneva; date not given]

[Text] Geneva—The Haitian crisis which was created by the 30 September coup d'etat may be approaching a settlement. The agreement reached in Washington on 23 February between deposed President Jean-Bertrand Aristide and the representatives of his country's parliament with a view to restoring the constitutional order has just been accepted by General Raoul Cedras, head of the putschists and of the armed forces. However, Father Aristide's interpretation of it shows the fragility of this agreement negotiated under the auspices of the OAS with strong U.S. support. In the interview which he granted us, the deposed president put forward as a precondition for his return to Port-au-Prince "the arrest of Gen. Cedras pending his trial" or, failing that, "his departure from the country."

"We discussed this one point for five hours in Washington: The representatives of the deputies wanted the agreement to stipulate that Gen. Cedras would benefit from the general amnesty planned for the rest of the Army, but I could not accept that under any circumstances." President Aristide, on a brief stopover in Geneva, where he addressed the UN Human Rights Commission, gave his version of the 23 February negotiations without any hesitation. "We finally reached agreement," he continued, "to exclude common criminals from the amnesty" and in his view these include Gen. Cedras and the other criminals in his small team who are responsible for the deaths of more than 1,500 people, according to the latest OAS report. "I cannot give my blessing to their impunity," Father Aristide said, hammering home his words, "I said that before and during the negotiations. Those who want to forget it are indulging in manipulations and misinformation."

One of the clauses of the agreement signed by Father Aristide clearly indicates that all the sides should agree to "respect the actions of the Haitian Parliament" after 30 September, including the ratification of Gen. Cedras' appointment as armed forces chief for three years.... "In case of disagreement," a conciliation commission is scheduled which will probably have its work cut out even if Father Aristide says he is prepared—is he being excessively naive?—to meet with those he wishes to bring before the courts or force into exile.

At all events, it seems that President Aristide clearly made other concessions when he signed the Washington agreement. Elected in December 1990 with 64 percent of the votes, but inexperienced in politics, he mainly chose "technocrats" and members of his entourage to form his first government—at the expense of the parties which had made his election possible. He finally came round to the idea of a "government of national unity" formed in agreement with Rene Theodore the prime minister on whom there is expected to be a consensus.

The Return of the U.S. Ambassador

Moreover, President Aristide pledged henceforth to respect the separation of powers and parliament's prerogatives which he had neglected. In his latest report presented in Geneva, the independent expert of the UN Human Rights Commission condemns primarily "the climate of terror" and the "large-scale daily violations of fundamental rights" under the present military regime but he also criticized President Aristide's "style of government" before the coup d'etat. "His tendency to govern according to the principles of direct democracy ran counter to the principles of the 1987 Constitution.... Appealing to the people's masses and bypassing the institutions was bound to lead to a crisis," this expert—Venezuela's Marco Bruni Celli—said.

The United States, whose ambassador has just returned to Port-au-Prince after being recalled for consultations on 30 January, is continuing to exert pressure, notably on the Army, to have the agreement accepted. Since its

signing, the flow of Haitian refugees has dried up. Of the 10,000 refugees fished out of the sea by the U.S. authorities, more than 6,000 have already been returned to Port-au-Prince because Washington did not feel that their request for asylum was justified. But is there a real desire for the return of the "shanty town priest" who proclaims in Geneva that "no democracy can function under the Army's boot," and is as virulent as ever in condemning "the Army's corrupt allies who are dabbling in drug trafficking and growing rich on contraband," calling for the implementation of the law and of justice?

The OAS has pledged to lift the embargo it decreed as soon as "the prime minister is ratified and the new government installed" in Port-au-Prince. Mr. Theodore, who would apparently agree to Gen. Cedras remaining at his post in the framework of a "Chilean-style" experiment, recently estimated that "the risk of endangering the president's life" should not be taken by hastening his return.

General Cedras Cited on Role of Army

FL0203142492 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole
in French 1200 GMT 3 Mar 92

[Text] The most important point in the news today involves an exchange of letters between General Raoul Cedras and Rene Theodore concerning the agreement signed in Washington by the Haitian parties, that is the Haitian Parliament and Jean-Bertrand Aristide, on 23 February. This is what Rene Theodore stated... sorry, this is what primarily Gen. Raoul Cedras stated in his letter to Mr. Rene Theodore, the National Reconstruction Movement leader:

I carefully listened to your news conference of 27 February, Cedras wrote in his letter; I hereby confirm the private conversation that we had on that day, right before your appearance before the news media. During our conversation, we discussed particularly the necessity for all Haitians to unite so a solution can be found so we can get the country out of this crisis that threatens its independence, its sovereignty, and its survival.

I insisted with you on the fact that the Haitian Armed Forces [FADH]—too often accused wrongly of using pressure to influence the decisions of the sectors in the national life—have shown through their public intervention that they want to remain a professional institution that is concerned with providing safety and protection that can allow those sectors to work and to develop freely in the country.

I have been careful, and I am still careful, not to give my opinions on the Washington agreement so the intention of influencing the current executive and the National Assembly is not attributed to me—or to the military institution through me—when they will have to decide on the future of that agreement. The FADH will not let themselves be used as a bogeyman or a smoke screen to tip the scales in favor of anyone. They want to be an

institution to safeguard the integrity of our territory, our independence, and our sovereignty as required by our Constitution in Article 266.

This comes from a letter written by Gen. Raoul Cedras.

Theodore Responds to Cedras

FL0203165992 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole
in French 1200 GMT 2 Mar 92

[“Text” of a letter from Prime Minister-Designate Rene Theodore in response to a letter from General Raoul Cedras, dated 29 February 1992, Port-au-Prince]

[Text] Rene Theodore's response to General Raoul Cedras, the commander in chief of the Haitian Armed Forces [FADH], did not keep people waiting. Rene Theodore has written, quote:

I have carefully read your 28 February letter in reaction to the news conference that I held on 27 February. During that news conference, I expressed the idea that the FADH must not be used as a smoke screen. By the way, you have resumed this idea in your letter. The point that seems to bother you in my statement is the fact that I asserted that you had accepted the agreement protocol. This is exactly the most important point for the country.

As you know, since 1986, the Army has been the institution that periodically reorganizes power. It is, then, normal that today all eyes are turned on the Army more than ever. As you received me before and after my trip to Washington and as you claimed and reiterated your support to the negotiated solution, not only to me but also to other personalities involved in the crisis and the negotiations, I did not find it necessary to maintain the anguish of a military skid, an anguish wittingly kept alive by extremists who just want to use the Army as a bogeyman or a smoke screen.

Further on, Theodore writes: During our various meetings before my departure for Washington, we actually focused on important issues tackled in your letter, especially the necessity for all Haitians to unite so a solution can be found, so the country can get out of this crisis that threatens its independence, its sovereignty, and its survival. However, after the positive conclusion of the negotiations that ended with the signing of an agreement, we discussed some points that are—as you said—extremely important, and both of us made suggestions as to the modes of enforcement of this negotiated solution.

As regards your questions concerning the agreement that I have signed and my answers, following your example, I will refrain from reporting them here as you gave a private character to our meeting in your letter. Unquote.

Ambassador to U.S. on Cedras Stand on Refugees

*FL0303115492 Bonaire Trans World Radio
in English 1130 GMT 3 Mar 92*

[Text] Haiti's ambassador to Washington says that Haiti's Army commander, General Raoul Cedras, had some time ago threatened to flood the United States with refugees. The ambassador said that threat is what influenced the U.S. decision to repatriate those thousands of refugees who have fled Haiti since September. Gen. Cedras has not commented on the new allegation.

Chamber of Commerce Urges Agreement Ratification

*FL0203170392 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole
in French 1145 GMT 02 Mar 92*

[Text] The Chamber of Commerce of Haiti has sent a press release fixing its position regarding the Haitian crisis. The Chamber of Commerce recognizes that the agreement signed in Washington on 23 February between the Haitian parties involved in the negotiations offers a way out of the crisis.

The embargo has carried away what was left of the rural economy and has practically destroyed industrial production, threatening as such the ecology and the national financial system, writes the Chamber of Commerce, giving to the political sector the entire scope to decide. The nation's productive forces have stoically endured this state of things for five painful months.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti, conscious of its great responsibility to the economic sectors and the labor classes of the country, urges the political leaders to ratify as soon as possible the agreement in order to stop the dangerous decline in the socioeconomic situation and to give back to the working class an opportunity to function. The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti believes that the time has come to call on the good will, the courage, and the patriotism of all political decision makers in order to reach the way out of the crisis without delay.

The Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Haiti expresses the cry of the entire economic community: Enough is enough!

El Salvador

Cristiani Interviewed on Border Issues, FMLN

PA0203193492 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL
in Spanish 1740 GMT 2 Ma. 92

[News conference by President Alfredo Cristiani with local and foreign reporters and unidentified moderator at the Treasury Police facilities in San Salvador—live]

[Text] [Cristiani] The ceremony at the facilities of the Treasury Police symbolically involves the National Guard. You know the agreements specifically state these two units will no longer have responsibilities as public security corps, and they will become part of the Armed Forces. The two corps' mission will be to protect the border and act as military police.

[Moderator] Carlos Mario Marquez of Radio Cadena YSU.

[Marquez] Mr. President, how many Treasury Police and National Guard members will join the Army? Second, Honduras issued a protest on 2 March. It denounced that the Salvadoran Government had reportedly been distributing land in border areas under dispute. I would like to know if you are aware of this.

[Cristiani] First, I understand there will be approximately 6,000 or 7,000—I will give you approximate numbers—Treasury Police and National Police members.

Regarding what you say about Honduras, the Salvadoran Government has distributed no land. We have no intention of doing anything with the border area that is pending a ruling from the International Court of Justice at The Hague. We will not interrupt or preclude the process the countries have agreed upon to issue the final ruling on that dispute. Consequently, the report that the government is distributing land in the areas which are involved in the dispute between Honduras and El Salvador is not true.

[Moderator] Alfredo Hernandez, EL UNIVERSITARIO.

[Hernandez] [Question indistinct?]

[Cristiani] You know the National Police corps is still in charge of security and public order. Of course, the National Police corps has been reduced and lacks the manpower to fulfill its responsibility at the national level. Effective this month we will strengthen the National Police to provide it with enough members to carry out its services in urban and rural areas of the country. This will be the corps in charge of public security during the transition period.

[Moderator] Maria Dolores Alciaq, UNOMASUNO.

[Alciaq] Mr. President, it is reported that the implementation of certain agreements is being slowly carried out. For example, several agreements should have been implemented today and it seems they will not. How

would you assess the work carried out by Copaz [National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace]?

[Cristiani] I think we must bear in mind that the schedule included in the agreements represents goals, rather than specific deadlines. This was stated in the agreements. Some of the schedules have met delays but this can be expected. The work being carried out by Copaz involves different components. Also, the adoption of certain decisions is taking longer than we had hoped and what the schedules had established. Nevertheless, this should not be considered a problem. I think one should concentrate on the determination to fulfill goals; we certainly hope that the work will be carried out as soon as possible, but no one should be bowled over in the process. I would like to refer to certain cases and state that the FMLN's [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] implementation is somewhat slow. On 2 March we sent—in fact, it was officially sent on Saturday 29 February—a protest to ONUSAL [UN Observers For El Salvador] because of the FMLN's delay in gathering at 15 designated zones.

[Moderator] Guillermo Penate of EL DIARIO DE HOY of El Salvador.

[Penate] Mr. President, this is my first question. The newspapers have published the procedure followed by security organizations when they dislodged the leftist groups that had occupied the land of some cooperatives which were part of the reformed group. Has this been reported to ONUSAL already. My second question is this. Who will be the National Civilian Police director as of today?

[Cristiani] The illegal occupation of lands has been reported to ONUSAL for some time. Some of these problems have persisted, such as the case of La Magdalena, where a cooperative of the Salvadoran Institute for Agrarian Transformation [ISTA] was involved on 1 March. [Words indistinct] Since 1980, the cooperative members themselves have tried to evict those who had occupied their land. The case is being investigated by the Santa Ana Department authorities because the same ISTA cooperative has sought [words indistinct] so the normal process in this particular cooperative is not interrupted again. All of this has been reported to ONUSAL. What was your second question?

[Penate] The name of the National Civilian Police director.

[Cristiani] As you know, the agreements stipulate that I must wait for a three-name list to be submitted by Copaz. We have not received any such list yet.

[Moderator] Last question. BBC correspondent (?Mario Asquin).

[Asquin] Mr. President, [words indistinct] National Guard as a security organization? My second question is this. Will the National Police be able to control crime?

[Cristiani] As I said before, generally speaking, we are satisfied with the Armed Forces' professionalization, reorganization, and modernization. We think the Salvadoran Armed Forces will continue to be the protector of national security, particularly regarding the sovereignty of our territory. The reorganization aims at reinforcing the Salvadoran Armed Forces. The National Guard and the Treasury Police will not exactly disappear. There will be a change of mission only. What will indeed disappear is their responsibility as public security organizations and auxiliary organizations for the administration of justice. As military units, they will merely be assigned a new mission, that of border surveillance. The National Police will require reinforcing because in its present state it cannot cope with maintaining security and public order both in urban and rural areas. This service had been rendered in rural areas by the National Guard and the Treasury Police, while the National Police worked in urban areas. We are in the process of reinforcing the National Police so it can fulfill its mission in the national territory during the transition period.

[Moderator] We have time for two more questions. Teleprensa [words indistinct].

[Reporter] [Words indistinct] of the arms seized from the FMLN. Were these arms included in the inventory submitted to ONUSAL?

[Cristiani] The government's role is to submit an inventory of the arms existing at the rallying zones. This requirement has been complied with fully.

[Moderator] Carlos Mario Marquez of Radio Cadena YSU.

[Marquez] Would you like to tell us more about ONUSAL's protest over the FMLN failing to comply with the 15 points? I would also like to know whether the Army is present at the 63 points that the agreements call for.

[Cristiani] On 29 February, the Armed Forces complied with the commitment to rallying at the points called for in the agreements. On the same date, a letter was addressed to Mr. Iqbal Riza expressing the government's concern over the FMLN failing to concentrate in the 15 zones agreed upon several days previously. We think this process can be completed in a very short time. This concentration should be completed as soon as possible. We still have not received any reply from ONUSAL on this. Unofficially, however, we know ONUSAL had already reported to the United Nations that the FMLN was not complying with the cease-fire agreed upon in the agreements, particularly regarding their staying at the specified zones and the FMLN's arms inventory.

Government Truce With Rebels Allegedly Broken

'Intense Shooting' Heard

PA0203211492 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish
2020 GMT 2 Mar 92

[Text] Tegucigalpa, 2 Mar (NOTIMEX)—A Honduran "HRN" [Voz de Honduras Network] radio broadcast at noon today reported that the truce between the Armed Forces and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) allegedly has been broken by "bloody clashes."

Quoting civilian sources in Lempira Department, which borders El Salvador, the radio station indicated that Salvadoran combat aircraft have been seen flying over Morazan Department, where "intense shooting" has been heard.

According to the "HRN," the aircraft allegedly had even dropped bombs on guerrilla positions near the border with Honduras.

Correspondents from the radio station in Lempira Department quoted townspeople along the border area as witnesses of the incidents.

Coprefa Denies Clashes

PA0203222192 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish
2151 GMT 2 Mar 92

[Text] San Jose, 2 Mar (NOTIMEX)—The Armed Forces Press Committee (Coprefa) of El Salvador today denied that there have been clashes between the Army and the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] in northern El Salvador, as the Honduran radio station La Voz de Honduras, HRN, has reported.

When asked about the alleged clashes, a Coprefa spokesman told NOTIMEX: "We have checked with members of the General Staff and they have denied these reports."

According to HRN, the truce between the Army and the FMLN was reportedly broken today when there were "bloody clashes" in Morazan Department, near the Honduran border.

HRN quoted witnesses from Lempira Department, in Honduras, who said that Salvadoran Air Force planes had participated in the clashes.

In telephone statements, a Coprefa spokesman—who requested that his name not be released—said that "perhaps some drunk fired shots into the air and the people on the other side of the border interpreted this to be combat."

'Statements Lack Veracity'

PA0303031592 Paris AFP in Spanish
0159 GMT 3 Mar 92

[Text] San Salvador, 2 Mar (AFP)—The UN Observers for El Salvador (ONUSAL) have denied that the cease-fire between the Salvadoran Government and the guerrilla has been broken. On 2 March Honduran military sources reported that the cease-fire had been violated.

A statement released by ONUSAL states: "With regard to information from abroad reporting the existence of alleged confrontations between the Armed Forces and the FMLN (Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front), ONUSAL wishes to report that according to our investigations those statements lack veracity."

Honduran military sources reported that on 1 March Honduran soldiers witnessed a confrontation between Salvadoran soldiers and guerrillas at the border in San Luis de la Reina. However ONUSAL, which is responsible for ensuring observance of the cease-fire in El Salvador, stated that its observers reported absolute normalcy in all areas where they are deployed since 1 February when the 11 years of civil war ended.

Guerrillas Charge Government With Air Incursions

'Contingency Plan' Mentioned

PA2902195492 Paris AFP in Spanish
1823 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Report by Carlos Mario Marquez]

[Excerpts] San Salvador, 29 Feb (AFP)—On 29 February, Salvadoran guerrillas accused President Alfredo Cristiani's government of provoking a virtual "break-down" of the cease-fire agreed upon in January 1992. The guerrillas charged that new air incursions have been made over areas where the rebels are concentrated and the ultrarightist clandestine death squads have been reorganized.

Commander Juan Ramon Medrano of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), told a group of foreign reporters that on 28 February an A-37 military airplane flew over the insurgent areas.

Medrano also charged that sectors within the Army and ultrarightist businessmen are organizing clandestine death squads, one of them identified as "Genesis," to eliminate leftists.

Medrano said, however, that the guerrillas already have a "contingency plan to respond to any provocation, because they will not play with us as they did in Colombia."

As for the airplanes, Medrano insisted that on 28 February, an aircraft broke into FMLN airspace in Perquin, Morazan, San Vicente, over the San Salvador Volcano, and over the Sheraton Hotel itself, where the FMLN

General Command and the UN Observers for El Salvador (ONUSAL) are staying.

"That airplane could not have been Honduran, nor could it have been a routine flight. We consider this to be a violation of the cease-fire, to which we will respond firmly," Medrano said.

The FMLN reported the incident on 28 February during a joint meeting on the cease-fire the guerrillas attended with the Army High Command and ONUSAL members, who promised to investigate the charges. [passage omitted]

The guerrilla leader also charged that small ultrarightist groups are "seeking to provoke us. We are, therefore, cautious of that kind of behavior," he said.

Nevertheless, the guerrilla leader did not rule out the possibility that the rebels might disperse. He said such a decision would be adopted only when all political mechanisms of settlement have been exhausted. [passage omitted]

'Right To Defend Ourselves'

PA0303044792 San Salvador TCS Television
Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 2 Mar 92

[Text] Facundo Guardado, commander of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN), called the separation of forces process initiated approximately one month ago in compliance with the Chapultepec Agreements positive. The FMLN leader said the process is going well despite the obstacles that have developed. The most serious and dangerous obstacles are Honduran aircraft flying over FMLN camps. For Commander Facundo Guardado this is only one more sign of the Salvadoran radical right's rejection of the peace agreements. Here is Commander Guardado.

[Begin recording] [Guardado] I think the Salvadoran radical right has the most to lose with this change, therefore, it opposes the progress. It will continue to progress, however.

[Reporter] Are you holding on to your position that if the aircraft continue to fly over your area you could open fire? President Cristiani has said this could be an error.

[Guardado] We have a legitimate right to defend ourselves and will do so anytime it is necessary. [end recording]

For the commander this will not halt the peace process initiated at the Chapultepec Agreements. On the contrary, he noted the agreements should be met with persistence and respect. All types of provocations should be avoided by the FMLN. When referring to land occupied by peasants who, according to the government, follow FMLN guidelines, Facundo Guardado acknowledged this has come about due to the scant discussion this issue received at the negotiating table. At that time it

was more convenient to prepare the political front for negotiations than to resolve this problem.

[Begin Guardado recording] There are sectors with an interest in creating distrust in the process. This is the campaign the government has launched regarding land takeovers. We want the land commission formed by the National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace to receive all the support and backing from all the sectors so this can be solved by consensus among peasants, land owners, and the government in a manner satisfactory for all.[end recording]

Commentary on Overflights

PA2902145392 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos
in Spanish to El Salvador 0200 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Station commentary: "We Are Not Fools, Mr. President"]

[Text] During the past few hours, Mr. Alfredo Cristiani said it would be a fatal error if the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front [FMLN] used its weapons against the planes overflying its camps.

The FMLN has emphatically said that the order given to its units to fire at war planes overflying its camps in a provocative way. [sentence as heard].

Mr. Cristiani should know it would be a fatal error if the Army for National Liberation [END] did nothing while war planes continue overflying its territories and its forces are still holding its weapons. Does Cristiani expect us to lay under a mango tree while war planes fly menacingly over our camps?

No, we are not fools, Mr. Cristiani. We are determined to comply with the agreements to the letter. No one should have any doubts about that.

According to President Cristiani, the fact that this type of plane should overfly our airspace does not represent an aggressive attitude because they are unaware of the areas where END forces are concentrated.

We know that there are forces opposed to the agreements and to peace and reconciliation. We urge those groups to reflect, because this is no time to beat the war drums or boycott the agreements. The government should rectify its confrontational position and should not block the agreements signed for all Salvadorans. Those agreements, which mark the country's political and economic modernization, are a challenge to struggle for their compliance to attain a new way of life for all Salvadorans.

Accusations of Peace Agreement Violations Made

Government 'Playing With Fire'

PA2902040892 (Clandestine) Radio Venceremos
in Spanish to El Salvador 0200 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Station commentary]

[Text] We have reiterated many times that after 11 years of war those who think they did not win because they ran out of time, and those who believe they had almost won the war, are wrong. Apparently, the government and other minority groups have not learned the lesson and want to keep on playing with fire.

The government of President Cristiani is playing with fire along with those opposed to the country's democratization. We say this because the government is hindering the peace agreements. Some may ask why the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] is accusing the government of hindering the peace agreements?

A few examples will suffice. The government is not giving any support to or facilitating the creation of the infrastructure required for the new National Civilian Police. It is not dissolving the National Guard, National Police, Treasury Police, and other security corps, and is trying to justify this by pointing to the increase in crime. In the same manner, the government has supported a plan permitting the overflight of war planes over the camps of the National Army for Democracy [END] in order to intimidate the nation. Cristiani has implemented the national reconstruction plan, without seeking an agreement with other social forces, to show that he is the president who has reconstructed the nation.

In other words, the government is hindering the peace process in every aspect. In the area of agriculture and livestock, the government is not complying with the agreements. It is trying to quench the fire with gasoline by starting a campaign of dislodging peasants who have lived in areas of conflict for many years. At the same time, it has launched a campaign of psychological warfare and intimidating propaganda to prevent peasants from negotiating the land with former owners.

The government has also prevented the delivery of material for the construction of the installations where the END fighters would be based starting in March.

We ask: Where is this attitude and policy of the Nationalist Republican Alliance leading us? Where will non-compliance with the agreements take us? At this time, invoking formulas that have been disastrous for the people would be the worst mistake. The government must change its direction and follow a path that will help us consolidate harmony and reconciliation. This, however, must be based on economic, political, and social justice in the country.

There is no room for polarizing tactics, because we already know where we are being led. This is the time when all forces in favor of the country's democratization must close ranks to demand that the government give up its attitudes that could hinder the agreements. We should not play with fire.

FMLN Land Occupations Cited

PA2802161092 San Salvador Canal Doce Television
in Spanish 0300 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Passages within quotation marks are recorded]

[Text] Presidency Minister Oscar Santamaria and Deputy Chief of Staff General Mauricio Vargas said FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] land occupations violate the peace agreements.

Dr. Santamaria said according to the agreements, the peace process and the establishment of a schedule should unfold in a climate of constitutional law and jurisprudence. He said, "I am discouraged by the FMLN's decision to promote a strategy of land invasions in El Salvador. This goes beyond the limits established by the peace agreements."

Santamaria said some peasants are occupying lands, which violates the spirit of the agreements, and must be described as usurpation.

"I must call for reconsideration," said Santamaria, "on the part of the FMLN leadership and all who may still believe conditions exist for the war to continue. It is not a matter of exchanging the war theater for street riots. This is not what the peace agreements promote."

"Individuals who wish to perpetuate problems already resolved must be removed. All negative elements must be removed."

Gen. Mauricio Ernesto Vargas noted the irresponsibility of recent rebels' statements, which are not in harmony with the climate of peace unfolding in El Salvador.

"We cannot do away with the use of force because the peace agreements exchanged weapons for political participation. The FMLN must change its attitude and work harder for the consolidation of peace in El Salvador. We will not be blackmailed. We are opposed to verbal terrorism at any time during the pacification process."

Vargas also classified the remarks of certain FMLN leaders as populist and hypocritical. He said they are inconsistent with the changes promoted by the peace process. He concluded by saying the rule of law and reason should prevail over violence and war in El Salvador.

Publicity Campaign 'Launched To Create Paranoia'

PA0103134792 (Clandestine) Radio Farabundo
Marti in Spanish to El Salvador 0000 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Station commentary]

[Text] A publicity campaign has been launched to create paranoia among the citizenry shortly before the abolishment of two of the most bloodthirsty and repressive corps ever to exist in our country this century. The media, which favors groups interested in creating this uncertainty, report the smallest criminal action with a touch of sensationalism. The goal is clear: Drive the

people to their knees before their executioners, venerating these groups as the only ones who can save them from the crime wave.

Business groups, the military, and ARENA [Nationalist Republican Alliance] members now appear, as if by magic, concerned about these criminals actions. They fail to mention, however, that many military and people who have ties with the ruling party are behind most of these actions. To make matters worse, the attacks seem to be well prepared beforehand by those who are behind this publicity campaign.

They are not really worried about crimes because they have always been carried out with their complicity. Their goal is to make people believe that the National Guard and Treasury Police should not disappear. These promoters of crime fail to consider the citizenry in general repudiates these two nightmares of militarism; and nothing will change the people's opinion that the two corps should be abolished in our country.

Crime must certainly be fought and a provisional plan has been prepared for this until the National Civilian Police is created. Within this transition phase, public security in the cities and zones not under the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front's control will be handled by the National Police with UN verification.

The National Police has the necessary number of members and it should no longer be a nest of squads and criminals. It should start, with UN Observers for El Salvador, to fight crime by sending criminal leaders—military officers or ARENA members, no doubt—to prison. The same thing was done in the past, when bands of kidnappers and bank robbers—like the ones who robbed the Agricultural and Trade Bank—were dismantled.

Cristiani Swears In New Treasury Minister

PA2902155392 San Salvador Radio Cadena YSKL
in Spanish 1200 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Text] Edwin Sagrera will be the new finance minister beginning 1 March following the resignations of the finance minister and deputy finance minister last week.

On 28 February, President Alfredo Cristiani swore in Sagrera, who for several months held the post of president of the Social Fund for Housing. A deputy finance minister has not yet been appointed.

Both Rafael Alvarado Cano and Jose Angel Quiroz, the minister and deputy minister of finance respectively, held their posts since 1 June 1989. They did not resign for political reasons, according to official sources.

Assembly Approves Electoral Court President

PA2802142092 San Salvador Canal Doce Television
in Spanish 0300 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Report by Marco Antonio Guevara]

[Text] On 27 February, the Legislative Assembly swore in the president of the Supreme Electoral Court [Tribunal Supremo Electoral] and the human rights ombudsman [procurador para la defensa de los derechos humanos]. The two posts were created following the signing of the peace accord.

The Democratic Convergence [CD] and the National Democratic Union [UDN] abstained to vote for the human rights ombudsman. This abstention did not create an obstacle in getting the necessary two-thirds majority due to the votes cast by the Nationalist Republican Alliance [Arena], the Christian Democratic Party [PDC], and the Authentic Christian Movement.

[Begin unidentified PDC deputy recording] This is the PDC bloc proposal to this assembly: We are asking our fellow deputies to support Carlos Mauricio Molina Fonseca, who is a highly qualified professional and can carry out his duties in accordance with the current needs of the country. [end recording]

According to UDN Deputy Mario Aguinada Carranza, the proposal was successful because it stemmed from a ARENA-PDC pact to name the president of the Supreme Electoral Court proposed by the Supreme Court of Justice.

[Begin unidentified deputy recording] In the early part of the past decade, he [not further identified] served as attorney general. This was a very important post because he was charged with protecting the rights of citizens. During that period, however, the most human rights violations were reported. That is why we feel the compromise candidate proposed to us is not the person the country needs now. As the majority party, we could in some way block any candidacy because we have 39 votes, and without them it is not possible to reach the necessary two-thirds majority. Our commitment is to protect human rights and ensure that our government also protects human rights. That is the sole intention and compromise of this party. [end recording]

Under these circumstances, Luis Arturo Saldivar was chosen as president of the Supreme Electoral Court and was sworn in on 27 February. The two officials will begin their work next week.

[Begin recording] [Molina] When I accepted the post of deputy labor minister in 1980 it was to prevent human rights violations. We must recall we were experiencing a war and the situation slipped out of the control in my office. We now see the results after 12 years. The conflict is over and we are creating a human rights ombudsman post, which I am honored to accept. [Saldivar] It was a great honor to have been proposed by the Supreme Court for this post and elected by the Legislative Assembly. The challenge is large because this is a major commitment. As I said before, we have five judges, and the five will work together and reach the decisions that will truly benefit El Salvador, which really needs it now.

[Reporter] [Question indistinct]

[Saldivar] To enforce the Constitution and the laws of the Republic. That is my purpose. [end recording]

It is important to note two things. The sort of parliamentary consensus that has existed in recent months is broken. Also, the possibility of a new congressional understanding among ARENA, PDC, and the National Conciliation Party virtually leaves out the CD. Internal unity in the CD, by the way, is undergoing its worst crisis.

Nicaragua

Daniel Ortega Grants Live Interview in Lima

PA0303035892 Lima Panamericana Television Network in Spanish 1200 GMT 2 Mar 92

[Interview with former President Daniel Ortega Saavedra by unidentified reporter in Lima on the "Good Morning, Peru" program—live]

[Excerpts] [Reporter] It is indeed a pleasure to have on the "Good Morning, Peru" program Commander Daniel Ortega, former Nicaraguan president and leader of the Sandinist National Liberation Front [FSLN]. Ortega took part in the Alternative Integration and Development for Latin America seminar workshop, which was organized by the Sao Paulo political party forum. Welcome commander.

[Ortega] Thank you.

[Reporter] By the way, is the title commander still valid?

[Ortega] The truth is the title of commander is more political than anything else. We had a period of struggle and took command of an armed political movement, even though we never joined the military. We were forced to take up arms to establish democracy in Nicaragua.

[Reporter] Are you comfortable being called commander?

[Ortega] I would feel more comfortable if you would call me Daniel, like the Nicaraguan people call me.

[Reporter] We will call you that. Daniel, there is talk this morning about your statements at the close of the meeting where you offered to mediate for peace in Peru. This is understood to be a dialogue offer to sectors that have not been very disposed to any dialogue, such as the Shining Path and the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement. Is this a goodwill declaration for effect more than anything else or do you intend, as you did in El Salvador and Guatemala, to propitiate peace with these groups?

[Ortega] I believe that as Latin Americans we are obliged to struggle to initiate a peace process in all of Latin America. When we speak of participation we are not speaking about one side but of the overall problem.

Violence in Latin American countries is institutionalized in as much as there is poverty, unemployment, health and housing problems....

[Reporter] Sorry for interrupting. Listeners always take part in our programs and their questions concern the Shining Path. How well do you know the Shining Path? Do you classify them as guerrillas, as Peruvian guerrillas? As far as most Peruvians are concerned, the Shining Path are obviously not guerrillas and do not have the status of guerrillas.

[Ortega] To tell you the truth, I know very little about the Shining Path. I know what the wire services say and what the international press publishes—that Peru is facing a very tough situation. I believe we are obliged to seek ways to contribute toward Peru's finding a peaceful and negotiated solution through dialogue with these armed groups.

[Reporter] How can one speak to groups that do not identify themselves or talk? We recently spoke here with a group of Salvadoran friends and they too said they believe the Shining Path are guerrillas. We notice you also use the term. Here we have an UPI wire service item quoting you as saying: I am willing to serve as mediator between the Peruvian guerrillas and Peru's democratic system. How can one describe this movement as guerrillas when they have nothing in common with the FSLN or the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front? Their leaders use different methods such as terror and murder to reach those oppressed sectors, like using children as human bombs or mine detectors. Does this seem to you revolutionary or politically valid?

[Ortega] I believe the revolutionary who takes up arms must have ethics. I think this is basic because otherwise we would not have the moral authority to criticize or to propose a deep social transformation process. I also think the people give the appropriate description of an armed movement. The people define and decide whether or not an armed movement is appropriate. I do think one needs to seek a negotiated solution through dialogue because even in the most difficult and complex processes one should not rule out dialogue.

[Reporter] It so happens that back in 1965 we had guerrillas. They were very romantic, with members such as (Luis de la Puente Uzeda), (Lobaton), and (Javier Hero), and in fact caused a vacuum in the Peruvian left. In the case of the Shining Path, no such vacuum is felt and this is a left wing group. The FSLN also managed to muster Latin American support. The FSLN has broad support, which is not the case here. I repeat my question: Do you think you can effectively mediate? Do you think your proposal to seek dialogue and peace is possible?

[Ortega] I think we must be realistic. In other words, there is a violent situation. I imagine that, because of this violent situation, an effort has been made to establish an institutional response by the Army and Police. If this does not work, a solution must be sought through negotiation and dialogue. What really counts is to solve the

problem. We had a very rewarding experience in our country. In the beginning, we refused to talk, even more so because of the U.S. Government aggression against the Nicaraguan people. Finally, however, we agreed to talk. We managed to communicate with those who had been killing us on the battlefield.

[Reporter] Do you think conditions in Peru favor an armed insurrection?

[Ortega] I can not say for sure because I am not very familiar with the situation in Peru. Nevertheless, I think the existence of a political process and political opportunities in Peru discourage armed action. But a climate of violence is created when political opportunities and democracy are not well rooted in the society and the economy.

[Reporter] Shining Path thinks you are a revisionist and someone who just gave up. The group does not regard other movements with sympathy. They never have, certainly not the Cuban revolution, the Nicaraguan revolution, or the Soviet Union. [Sentence indistinct] We welcome what we could describe as their good intentions for peace, although they do not stand much of a chance, Commander.

[Ortega] When we were immersed in war as the result of the U.S. Government intervention, we thought peace was impossible in Nicaragua. But we have advanced. A similar situation occurred in El Salvador. Who would have thought the United States would finally accept the peace process? But it did. I think it is important to maintain hope and work for what the people desire: peace and tranquillity in every area. This effort starts with attaining peace.

[Reporter] Let's talk about your country. What is the FSLN's current stand? Are you people completely and effectively in opposition to the government of Violeta Chamorro? Do you enjoy the support of a large segment of the population? Is the FSLN making a significant contribution?

[Ortega] We are a revolutionary force that plays a role beyond the usual opposition. In other words, we are not in the opposition just for the sake of it or because we lost the 1990 elections. We are committed to a deeper purpose in Nicaragua, to strengthening democracy in political and social terms. This leads us to backing the government while criticizing it.

[Reporter] Do you recognize the Chamorro government's achievements in combating inflation, for instance?

[Ortega] Yes, we recognize the government's achievements. I would even say we have worked together for these achievements. In other words, such progress would have been impossible without Sandinist participation. This participation was essential to the counterrevolutionary disarmament and facilitated the government's organization.

[Reporter] Is the FSLN still influential in Nicaragua? Bear in mind that the Sandinists even voted for Chamorro for the sake of peace. In other words, the nation's desire for peace could be fulfilled with a not-too-belligerent government that could get some kind of U.S. recognition. You fought the United States hard. It was a terrible confrontation. In the end you, too, compromised with the IMF and the World Bank. Chamorro's government handled all this.

[Ortega] The truth is we compromised with the IMF simply because we were blocked. The U.S. Government did not allow us access to the IMF and World Bank resources. So we applied our own program and our own economic policy. We applied our own measures and spread them to various areas of society. Both the benefits and the negative effects of these measures were borne by various parts of society, not only by the working sector.

[Reporter] Are any Sandinists up in arms?

[Ortega] Some companeros have had to react like that in opposition to ...

[Reporter, interrupting] To the recontras?

[Ortega] The recontras rearmed themselves so the Sandinists rearmed themselves too. Lately, we have been encouraging a disarmament and pacification process. Both recontras and recompas have been disarming. I would say the situation in Nicaragua is very complex and difficult. We share the difficulties of Latin American countries, the negative effects of neoliberal policies, and the challenge of moving the country forward.

[Reporter] What is the situation in view of the advance of neoliberal policies? Following the collapse of the USSR, we see these neoliberal policies settling in our hemisphere. For example, in Mexico and in Argentina—what we thought were the less liberal countries—we see this situation. It seems this offers a solution to this part of the world. Is socialism now no longer an alternative?

[Ortega] If you talk to the Latin American presidents, they will tell you they do not agree with those measures. There is an international situation, however, that imposes such measures. On the other hand, there is another situation and that is the lack of Latin American integration. I feel an alternative must begin by strengthening a process of Latin American integration that could confront these neoliberal policies. If Latin America integrated, we could be in a better position to discuss, for example, the issues of debt, trade, and several other problems affecting all Latin American countries and point out how a bilateral attitude is fatal for these countries. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Don Daniel, what do we do with Cuba? Many viewers ask this.

[Ortega] I would say this question should be especially addressed to the United States. I recently told Secretary Baker in Mexico the United States should contribute with detente and peace in Latin America. In Central

America we made some headway and the United States had to finally respect the decision—in Nicaragua and El Salvador—that we needed to deal with Guatemala.

[Reporter, interrupting] Let us assume the Cuban blockade is lifted. Is the Cuban model still valid for you given the increasing number of Cubans living abroad and the many on the island anxious to leave? We have seen what happens when a door is suddenly opened, as Castro did with the Peruvian Embassy a long time ago, and thousands of Cubans sought to leave the island.

[Ortega] Look... [hesitates] I have visited Cuba and I know Fidel very well. I have been through moments of crisis like the times you mention and I can say that Cuba does not object to people leaving. The problem is...

[Reporter, interrupting] They are not allowed to leave...

[Ortega, interrupting] No, no, no. The problem is with the countries the Cubans request visas from which do not grant them. Pressure is then exerted on the people and then they have no other option than to invade an embassy to be able to leave Cuba and then turn this into a political case. In other words, Cuba does not place restrictions on its citizens who want to leave. The United States has abrogated an existing agreement with Cuba following the Mariel incidents which called for the U.S. to accept those Cubans interested in traveling to the United States. The U.S. is shutting the door on Cubans who want to enter the U.S., the same way entry is closed to Latin Americans. Europeans are not very enthusiastic to receive thousands of Cubans...

[Reporter, interrupting] You agree then that Cubans want to leave...

[Ortega, interrupting] I believe in every Latin American country there is a normal tendency to want to leave, to migrate, or move...

[Reporter, interrupting] Why? Remember Cubans are supposedly happy with their system...

[Ortega, interrupting] No, because I feel human beings have a basic need for communicating, moving around, and Cubans have the same need. For example, a Peruvian who is living well here might feel like traveling to other countries, or moving around. Some think by traveling to other countries they will be in a better situation, and so forth.

[Reporter] Well, then the case of Cuba is a case of eternal tourism, because many would like to leave and...

[Ortega, interrupting] The problem is the blockade on Cuba. I think if the United States lifts the blockade...

[Reporter, interrupting] The USSR does not support Cuba now as it did before.

[Ortega] I think this is a test for Cuba's strength. The Cuban revolution is not an artificial revolution, but rather a revolution that arose from the true Cuban

situation. In other words, it is not the case of eastern Europe following the Yalta Agreements. The revolution in Cuba arose because there was the Batista dictatorship. When confronted by the dictatorship, a socialist option came up with a specific proposal. [passage omitted]

[Reporter] Have you ever talked with Fidel Castro—we know he is your friend—about holding a plebiscite or free elections, or is he truly afraid of consulting the people?

[Ortega] He is not afraid of consulting the people, but that would not really solve the social and economic problems of Cuba. What good does it do Cuba to hold a plebiscite or elections if this will not solve the economic and social problems of Cuba. I think this would merely satisfy the United States, which has exerted pressure in that direction. After all, if Fidel were to win the elections, that would not please the United States.

Had we won the elections in Nicaragua...[pauses] if I had won the 1990 elections, what would the United States have said? What would the conservative groups of Latin America have said? They would have said: Of course, the Sandinists cheated, the Sandinists will never give up power; they would have said there had been fraud. That is what they would have said.

[Reporter, interrupting] Commander, I was there, and we must admit the elections were honest.

[Ortega] True, but had we won the elections in a honest manner, we would be questioned. So back to the topic, if Fidel won the elections, the United States would not want to admit it.

[Reporter] Somebody once told me the Nicaraguan elections in 1990 were honest, and the best evidence is that the Sandinist Front lost. That was the best evidence.

[Ortega only smiles, does not answer]

[Reporter] Commander, a few minutes ago we were discussing the issue of socialism as an alternative. What should the Latin American socialist parties do now? You attack the neoliberalism that is gaining ground in this part of the world. Nonetheless, what is against it? What is the feasible alternative?

The truth is that the fall of socialism in eastern Europe also confused many parties in our countries and showed them that there is no solution, that this model has failed.

[Ortega] Well, I think the political forces must analyze the events in eastern Europe and find a new alternative. There have been some new emerging forces in Latin America that became very noticeable, particularly in the last decade. One of these forces is Sandinism, and we made a proposal toward socialism that broke away with the orthodox model.

We proposed a pluralist society, with a mixed economy, and people did not believe in us. Some said this was not

revolutionary, not with that type of socialism. Some said it had to be done as the Soviets did it, as it was done in eastern Europe.

[Reporter] In other words, copying the models of eastern Europe.

[Ortega] That is right, copying models. I believe there is a very rich process going on in Latin America, where new alternatives have developed. One of these is an alternative toward socialism in democracy. I am mentioning not only the case of Nicaragua, but also the case of the Workers' Party [PT] in Brazil, which is a political force headed by Lula da Silva that managed to run for the presidency, despite many difficulties.

[Reporter] Is socialism incompatible with the market economy, with privatization, with neoliberalism, with any type of opening?

[Ortega] I think socialism must take reality into consideration. In other words, the reality of the market, of international economic relations, and then work toward a process in which [word indistinct] is basic. In this manner, it will establish the internal bases for the modifications that will allow a better distribution of wealth, and it will wage a battle in the international field. The truth of the matter is a socialist proposal must be tied to the international economic order, to the debt problem.

All of these problems are a heavy burden. With our socialist option, we were forced at a certain moment to reach a conclusion. We had no other alternative but to implement certain measures that could be considered neoliberal.

Nonetheless, a neoliberal-type measure is not the same when it is implemented in a manner that it seeks to distribute evenly the costs of this measure. In this manner, the rich will also participate in the benefits and the costs of these measures rather than just burdening the workers with all of the costs. That would make the poor even poorer and would throw them into poverty and misery and make the rich richer. That is what we fought.

[Reporter] Therefore, you are also some sort of a socialist, half neoliberalist? Would you accept any of these proposals?

[Ortega] When we fought against Somoza, we used the Garand rifles made in the United States. The Garand rifle was given to the Somozist National Guard. We used those rifles to fight against Somoza and the U.S. domination in Nicaragua. So this brings us to...

[Reporter] I can see what you are driving at.

[Ortega] So, it all depends on who has the weapons, it depends on who implements the measures if these measures will move in a more equitable and just direction.

[Reporter] Commander, it has been a pleasure to have talked with you and have had the only live interview

granted by Daniel Ortega, former Nicaraguan president, to Peruvian television. Thank you very much.

[Ortega] Thank you very much and greetings to the Peruvian people.

* Further Discussion of Medal Awarded to Attache

* Ortega Criticized

92CA0089A Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish
28 Jan 92 p 4

[Article by Silvio Prado]

[Text] For many, the statement that "man is the master of his silence and the slave of his words" is law. By it they mean that what a person says is indeed a reflection of his intentions.

Starting with the election defeat of the FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front], General Ortega has been displaying what for some is political savvy and for others outright opportunism. Ranging from his statements to the Uruguayan daily LA BRECHA to the medal awarded to the American military attache, he has followed a trajectory so carefully designed that one might think these are isolated events aimed at "creating a controversy." On the contrary, however, he has chosen words and events that enable him to gradually define the general outline of a plan: presenting himself as the only alternative that can save the country, equidistant between rightist extremists and the "far left," 21st-century Bonapartism, in sum.

After what he told LA BRECHA (do our readers recall the bit about the preeminence of one faction over the other, eliminating members of the DN [National Directorate] based on their age, and a whole series of other things), I took the trouble to reread works published by the general in previous years and was stunned by the contrast. If we compare them with his speeches and actions over the past year, we shall no longer know which one to believe: the man who recommended hanging the bourgeoisie from the power poles or the one who labeled those opting for continuity of the revolutionary purpose as a radicalized minority.

In order to try to make things clear, I shall borrow the chatty style of military edicts used by those who consider the granting of the Camilo Ortega Medal appropriate, at least technically.

1—Although, technically speaking, the general has every right to award the medal to whomever he deems most worthy, it was incorrect, politically speaking, to have recognized the aggressor and aggressee with the same distinction! General, do you perhaps recall the lesson in dignity taught by the Vietnamese when they rejected the Nobel Peace Prize they were to share with Kissinger? To admit your mistake will not make you weaker; on the

contrary, it will elevate your political popularity rating above and beyond anything you are so anxious to project.

2—Despite the claims of certain strategists of "the new" international order that now "we are the natural allies of the United States of America," reality is as eloquent as it was on Baker's recent visit. According to his public statements—who knows what he may have asked for privately—American foreign policy continues to view us from the same angle it did years ago. We shall not see those "marks of a dignified relationship, of mutual, civilized respect" that Lieutenant Colonel Quinn helped strengthen.

Quite the contrary. Never before had any Yankee official been so specific about the changes desired by the empire—unless they are the new styles to which the general refers.

In other words, there are no substantive reasons for awarding such a high distinction since the general states on page 127 of his book "Sandinists," the United States will never want for excuses to attack us (...). I repeat once again that the problem lies in the fact that the United States does not accept us as we are." Naturally, if we ignore the fact that Baker made no public claim about the EPS [Sandinist People's Army], then we have no other choice but to recommend to Major Vivas that he award the highest police medal to the chief of the CIA station in Nicaragua so that they will leave him in peace and so that his detachment may be considered both professional and nonpartisan.

3—To label those of us who disapprove of the awarding of the medal to the American military officer as an "radical leftist minority which endeavors to manipulate the sacred patriotic feeling and national dignity" leaves a great deal to desire from a man claiming to be for democracy and tolerance for dissenting opinions. It remains to be seen what instruments the general uses to measure that minority or how he determined that his decision has majority support. One of the prices of being a leader of an organization such as the FSLN is not knowing whether prestige results from one's own merit or the party.

Fortunately, we members of the FSLN are not his soldiers. In civilian life, mistakes are criticized, decisions debated, and errors pointed out. If criticism bothers you so much, then you picked the wrong profession! Anyone who does or says something he should not must hear what he does not want to hear.

4—I do not understand what he means by "unfeasible, destabilizing proposals that can only make the overwhelming situation of the poor even worse." Perhaps "unfeasible" should be read as giving up the revolution and its achievements and the business about destabilization as the rejection of all attempts to oppose the government's neoliberal program, or perhaps as a condemnation of Sandinists who have been forced to take up arms to defend their lives.

5—Concerning the need for “committed, calculating leaders to explain and channel phenomena.” I do not think the general is qualified to make such a recommendation. Chapter 3 of a bulletin from the Ministry of Defense in December 1989, on the occasion of the American invasion of Panama, ordered “the neutralization, suspension, and execution of the activities of ‘sell-out’ elements,” demonstrated little calculation or political commitment on the part of the general because it engaged us in an enormous political problem right in the middle of an election campaign. Furthermore, his violent reaction to a BARRICADA reporter a few weeks ago exhibited little of the equanimity he now recommends and reaffirmed his lack of tolerance for any observation (critical, naturally) from the Sandinist ranks.

It is not the fault of those of us who still believe in the viability of the revolution if we stand in the way of the general’s plans. The truth is that we can no longer remain silent in the face of a personal program that is detrimental to the values, principles (which still exist, although no longer is there any “ideological East”), the martyrdom of those who died or were disabled, and respect for those of us who have survived and continue to fight.

It serves no purpose to try to justify the unjustifiable; it only aggravates the harm. However much one might believe in the conversion of the American Government, its actions indicate the opposite. However much Quinn has done, he did not deserve such a high distinction. To paraphrase an article published Saturday entitled “In the Complex Scheme of Alliances in Which We Live,” we do not know what the next step will be. Perhaps changing the words of our anthem so they will forgive us?

Technically speaking, a mistake was made in awarding the highest honor to an American military man of middling importance. I am beginning to worry about what we will give Collin Powell when he visits Nicaragua!

* ‘Real’ Issues Clouded

92CA0089B Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish
29 Jan 92 p 4

[Article by Manuel Eugarrrios]

[Text] Today we are forced to turn to a red-hot issue that has roused heated controversies—not exempt from insults—in the ranks of the Sandinists: the awarding of the Camilo Ortega Medal to a high-ranking American military official.

However, we prefer to consider another aspect of the issue which we consider equally interesting and perhaps controversial as well, one that is part of the intensely persistent sectarianism among many FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front] members and activists.

It is logical and natural, particularly from the political perspective, to feel pain and great spiritual bitterness over the granting of such a prestigious honor to the

representative of a government that martyred our people for nearly a decade, even though that soldier may have been particularly worthy, if such was the case.

It has been claimed that it was an act of opportunism and also that it does great harm to the morale and ethics of those Sandinists who had the courage, alongside the people, to overthrow the Somoza dictatorship, to fight, even at the cost of their lives, not just tyranny itself, but as participants in the secret war imposed on us by the succeeding American Governments, and to make the greatest sacrifices so that Nicaragua might regain its freedom.

Nevertheless, some think that in terms of partisan and even merely civic morals and ethics, there are a number of issues that have not yet been solved after two years, issues that have damaged the party’s morality even more than the act of granting such an honor. At least they are very similar.

They wonder, for example, if it is not also a serious lack of suitability—not to use a stronger label—that the party’s Ethics Committee neither learned of, much less judged—at least to our knowledge—all the dirty tricks, corruption, and appropriation of government and party property and assets which, in the final analysis, were created by the sweat of the people’s brow.

These analysts rightly believe that this was not the purpose for which Camilo Ortega, Carlos Fonseca, Pedro Arauz, and so many other Sandinist heroes gave their lives, and that to conceal or forgive such acts also constitutes a violation of revolutionary morality.

We totally understand the anger and indignation felt by disabled veterans and the relatives of those who gave their lives over the granting of the medal to the *gringo* diplomat, but we cannot on that basis fail to point out acts of immorality in Sandinist ranks that go unpunished, much less accept from their authors criticisms aimed at the person who, even with any errors he may have committed or might commit, has guaranteed, after 25 February 1990, that Sandinists would not go into exile, be jailed, or face death at the hands of a secret firing squad.

Nor can questions about morals or ethics be asked by those who, either under the table or skirting illegality, are involved in business dealings with current government officials, according to the vox populi.

If we were to go by these virulent, sectarian accusations, excluding those who proffer them based on their scant understanding of the times in which Nicaragua finds itself, we would have to conclude that Henry Ruiz’ visit to the United States at the invitation of the Department of State also represents an immoral act because he will have to extend his hand to and perhaps embrace the representatives of the government that organized and led the war against the revolution. We shall also recall all the ringing slogans that were not heeded during the last years of the revolutionary government.

For all of these reasons, we agree almost completely with the recent article written on the subject by Victor Tirado, one of whose paragraphs states: "In the final analysis, one does not have to think to hurl insults. No one should declare that he possesses the absolute truth and is right."

In the final analysis, it is uncertain whether such a ruckus raised over a medal—which Victor says is not the central issue—might constitute or be confused with a smoke-screen that muddies the serious matters still not solved within the party, in particular, elucidating once and for all what the party's ideological principles will be and, more specifically, what its programmatic and strategic platform is if in truth, as Tirado also claims, we want to be a real political option in the future.

Let us close with a phrase uttered by Victor himself: The field is open. Let us begin the real debate. Let us not get deadlocked in debate over false issues.

And let us add: Thank you, General Ortega, for all you have done for the survival of Sandinism. Rest assured that no medal can cast a stain on the place you so proudly hold in the history of the Nicaraguan revolution.

We also want to make it clear that this article had already been written four days before Major Tomas Borge publicly urged Sandinists to cease harping on this controversial issue of the medal.

Furthermore, we also wish to inform our trusted readers that this will be the last "Vantage Point" column I shall publish in EL NUEVO DIARIO. Due to internal problems I personally consider insurmountable, I shall no longer be working for this newspaper.

Lest this be considered a "swan song," however, we cherish the hope of finding a fraternal forum from which to continue publishing our old column and freely expressing our thoughts on the important issues of national life.

* Ortega's Role Viewed

92CA0089C Managua EL NUEVO DIARIO in Spanish
26 Jan 92 p 2

[Article by Edwin Sanchez Delgado]

[Text] On a day like any other, Humberto Ortega stated that the only way to get Somoza out of his barracks was to shake him out. The prevailing orthodoxy at the time made a great to-do and cursed all the guerrilla protests then shaking the country. The kindest labels attached to the rebel leader around 1977 condemned him as a promoter of adventurism, eternal coups, and petty bourgeois conceptions within the revolutionary movement.

On another occasion, the same rebel leader told a well-known intellectual to coordinate a broad movement that would include several of our nation's most prominent figures from the political, cultural, and economic fields. Thus emerged The Twelve and, as one might have expected, there were those who hastened to entone, as

yet another chorus in the very midst of the rebel plan, this verse: "Armed branch of the bourgeoisie discontented with Somoza."

What is singular about our recent national (nonpartisan) history is that the same man played the biggest role in the different phases of this as-yet unfinished book. Clearly, if his presence is closely linked with these pages, it is not because of any capricious desire to appear on center stage or the vicissitudes of life: It is the one who sees beyond the simple plays that any run-of-the-mill adversary can imagine who has the greatest probability of taking the enemy king.

And it is precisely vision in which this country's average politician is sorely lacking. Obviously, a military leader who has been the author of the iron defense of the revolution in the preceding decade, has more art than a rebellious civilian on a speaker's platform.

As in the past, this now means for some that the sky is falling because the same man, in another phase of history and in a different action that astonishes those slow to gain a better perception of reality, places on the breast of an American official a medal instituted by the Army.

Some call it unpardonable; others an act of betrayal, a political mistake, unjustifiable and a prolonged and risky, etc. They wonder why they did not create a medal different from the one awarded to the lieutenant colonel, which is a symbol. We would be in a sorry state if the nation's military started instituting awards just to get out of a tight spot and please others. The awarding of a medal is a sincere, serious gesture and must be understood as such.

There are more important issues on which neither the necessary ink nor saliva has been spent. There are matters requiring the same stridency as that which greeted "the political mistake" of the general, who is not infallible just because he holds such a high post!

It should be noted that it would be more beneficial if those claiming to hold revolutionary ideas would practice what they preach! No one in this country would urge a Gurdian or a Cesar to take a humbler attitude or lead a more Franciscan life simply because they have never presented themselves as revolutionaries or as the brother of the sun or the moon!

And yet, there are individuals who dared to pronounce the name of Che Guevara and proclaim his virtues, which are truly those of a 20th-century saint, leading a licentious life while an entire nation was laying down its lives, then and now! This is heinous! This is an abomination!

Yet throughout all these years, the exemplary attitude in his daily life, the life of another saint, Carlos Fonseca Amador, has had no replica. The enormous figure of the founder of the FSLN [Sandinist National Liberation Front] has been relegated to speeches and his example confined to a poster hung in ministries and government agencies and formal celebrations in the town square.

It would have been good and healthy for the spirit if as much noise had been made demanding, if not control over behavior stemming from power, then at least over words, for the abuse of the language accompanying the action of Julio Buitrago and Ricardo Morales Aviles resulted in justifiable distrust on the part of those who believed—and still believe—in old ideals.

And yet, judging by what has happened here, it is better to waste time on the blessed medal than to think about the intrinsic values of a revolutionary.

One perceives something else in this whole situation: the extreme zeal bordering on fanaticism which did so much damage in the past and as a result of which so many Nicaraguans became the target of groundless accusations, suspicions, and discredit simply because they did not follow the current slogans.

During that period, it was more important to give a post to any individual good at shouting on the street and in demonstrations even if, as far as his work went, he was totally useless. With few exceptions, professionals and technicians were never recognized as such because first came "political correctness," one's prostration before the prevailing icons, then performance.

Thus it was that many became the target of denigrating epithets and attaching labels such as "counterrevolutionary," "deviate," "having no conscience," "immature," and "diversionist" became commonplace.

Now, in contrast with the past, the big guns are aimed at a high priest of Sandinism—if by this we mean, not only the nature of a party, but rather, a Nicaraguan attitude—who, perhaps because he occupies the most delicate post in the country, becomes a perfect target for even the poorest marksman.

And voices are indeed raised, shouting for his "crucifixion." Suspicion looms over the general and what no one was able to do before, not even with entire battalions and contrasurgent forces including Aguila VI or a decade of dirty war, they intend to accomplish now through public discredit thanks to an overheated mood that is good for no one.

Our people, who scarcely have enough money for bus fare, who get excited over a Nemesio Porras drink, who work as vendors at El Oriental, who still toil in factories, who have nothing to eat tonight, and most of whose opinions still do not count in controversies in the press, certainly would not be so disturbingly quick to lift a finger in condemnation.

If a general is useful in war, he is even more indispensable—given our circumstances here—in the incredible, strange time of peace.

Panama

Endara Gives Speech at Opening of Legislature

PA0203182592 Panama City Circuito RPC
Television in Spanish 1652 GMT 2 Mar 92

[Speech by President Guillermo Endara at the opening of the new session of the Legislative Assembly in Panama City on 1 March—recorded]

[Text] I have come here today not only to do my constitutional duty but to greet you personally and wish you success in your legislative activities. This success will be a reality to the extent that wise laws are approved by this parliament, consistent with the people's immediate and future needs. Along these lines, you can rest assured that you will have in the executive a firm ally, never an opponent, willing to work with you for the establishment of all the measures favorable for the Panamanian people.

There is no doubt that we have attained great progress in a number of fields in the past two years. At present our country stands firm, optimistically struggling for a better future. We have solved many problems, although some still persist. We continually face new problems and new challenges. I am not only referring to the new government I preside over but to the entire country and Panamanian society, in which I can see the determination and optimism we did not have three years ago. It is up to the government to stimulate this determination and keep the flame of optimism alive.

With wisdom and common sense, the Executive and the Legislative Assembly are in a position to more than meet the expectations of our citizens, showing that we always take into consideration the best interests of the nation. One persistent problem, although it shows clear signs of improving, is unemployment. We must admit this problem still exists and it is a heavy burden. This is intolerable. Numerous parents are still looking for a steady, respectable job so they can give their families the necessary security for developing tomorrow's qualified citizens. With the same honesty, I wish to point out that the official figures indicate a remarkable and promising improvement. The rising number of unemployed has been stopped in the past two years because the number of new jobs available is greater than the number of people who joined the labor market. Although this positive difference is slight, it is a sign that we are on the right track. I trust in the continued growth of the private sector's activities in 1992. This growth, together with a broad application of the government's investment program thanks to the normalization of our relations with international financing organizations, will have an even greater impact on our battle against unemployment this year.

We must work together for successful results. We must also work together to strengthen democracy. We must remain vigilant. We struggled arduously against the tyranny to breathe the air of liberty we enjoy today. We must care for this precious treasure, as opposed to those who do not

understand this lifestyle because their shortsightedness makes them yearn for times and outdated styles that have been overcome forever.

Democracy, which is young in our environment, is being strengthened and has risen from the ashes of poverty left to us by a failed dictatorship. Let us all help so that our democracy may be well understood, properly exercised, and properly promoted.

Mr. President, honorable legislators: the date is not propitious for me to deliver an extended message. I take this opportunity to express my great satisfaction because the Panamanian people are enjoying these festivities preceding Lent. I hope that through our work, every day more and more Panamanians can enjoy these festivities free of worries and urgent needs. Because of this I have prepared a written report on administrative issues that I will formally deliver to the assembly presidency to distribute to each of you.

May God illuminate our minds, feed our resolve and our hearts, and always protect the Panamanian nation. Thank you very much.

Minister Denies Canal Privatization Plans

*PA0203182792 Panama City EL PANAMA
AMERICA in Spanish 2 Mar 92 p 1A*

[Report by Jose Ivan Ramos]

[Text] Planning Minister Guillermo Ford said on 1 March it "is not true" that his ministry has an official document or survey suggesting the option of privatizing the Panama Canal's operations.

The second vice president referred to a report published in this newspaper's 1 March edition examining the possibility of privatizing some of the canal's services.

The information was quoted in a document entitled "Economic Vignettes from the Ministry of Planning and Economic Policies," which states that the alternatives for managing the canal include an option to privatize its operations. The same thing was done with the railroad and the French Canal—which operated as private enterprises.

Legislator Carlos Arellano Lennox, a member of the Canal Affairs Commission, said if the facilities are turned over to a private or transnational enterprise, we would "refuse to turn the Panamanian state into a semi-power."

Nevertheless, the Christian Democratic legislator said some services can be privatized, but the Panamanian state must maintain absolute ownership. "The canal allows Panama to remain in a foremost position at the world level," he said.

"Complementary canal services may be privatized," Arellano Lennox added. These services include those rendered at the ports, security services, accident control, locks maintenance, and protection of the ecology, among others.

Argentina

Ministry 'Surprised' by Peru's Cholera Communique

PY0203130292 Buenos Aires TELAM in Spanish
0122 GMT 29 Feb 92

[Text] Buenos Aires, 28 Feb (TELAM)—The Argentine Foreign Ministry tonight expressed its "surprise" over the contents of an official communique by the Peruvian Foreign Ministry on the "origin of cholera" detected on board an Aerolinas Argentinas flight.

High-ranking Argentine Foreign Ministry sources consulted tonight have expressed "surprise" and insisted on the need to be "prudent" regarding the case involving the Aerolinas Argentinas flight to Los Angeles.

The sources said that "no responsibility will be admitted without technical evidence." They added: "We must wait for an official report to be issued [words indistinct] Los Angeles, which will explain the situation."

The sources stated: "Argentina is in solidarity with Peru in the difficult times it is experiencing and it is following with great concern this situation, which also affects the entire continent. Argentina hopes that a definitive solution will be found in the next few days to this unfortunate incident."

Menem-Libya Tie Evidence; Noriega Link Charged

PY0203232392 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES
HERALD in English 2 Mar 92 p 9

[Text] (DYN-NA)—While former presidential aide Mario Rotundo handed reporters the evidence to back his allegations that President Carlos Menem received financial help from Libyan leader Mu'ammur Qadhafi, a report revealed that ex-Panamanian President Manuel Antonio Noriega contributed 400,000 dollars to Menem's campaign in 1988.

The report that Noriega provided Menem with funds was published by the Buenos Aires daily Pagina/12 yesterday. According to the newspaper, current Argentine Ambassador to Costa Rica Alicia Martinez Rios was the contact between both leaders at the time Menem was about to take on then Buenos Aires Governor Antonio Cafiero in the Justicialist Party's primary election.

Pagina/12 tied the story to the close links that Menem reportedly had with carapintada [painted face] leader Mohamed Ali Seineldin, who was a military instructor in Panama in 1988 and on good terms with a number of politicians who backed Menem.

Seineldin was apparently convinced by Justicialist officials that once Menem took office the Armed Forces would be reformed and he would be made their central figure, Pagina/12 reported.

The news of the alleged help granted by the Panamanian government came on the same day Rotundo provided

evidence of Qadhafi's four million dollar contribution to Menem's presidential campaign.

Rotundo revealed three letters—allegedly signed by Menem—that were sent to Qadhafi and a photocopy of a telex. The contents of all four documents were described by Buenos Aires newspaper Clarin yesterday.

Rotundo charged that the Libyan funds began to arrive at Menem's presidential campaign headquarters after the President met with a number of Qadhafi's aides in Rome that same year.

Of the three letters—all with different headings and according to Clarin allegedly with different versions of Menem's signature—the daily reported that only the first, headed Dr. Carlos Saul Menem and dated February 1989, could possibly refer to Libyan funds.

"I think this is the opportunity to specially thank the present that you (Qadhafi) have sent me through the Foundation for the Peace and Friendship of the People, whose president, Mr. Antonio Mario Rotundo, held talks with your aides," reads the letter.

The other letters contain praises and notes of respect and admiration for the Libyan leader. The second letter—dated May 30, 1989—that Rotundo claims Menem sent Qadhafi included an invitation to Menem's swearing-in as president. The letter headed Governor of La Rioja, was addressed to "Brother Colonel Mu'ammur al-Qadhafi, Leader of the Great Fatah Jamahiriyyah Arab Libyan Socialist Popular Revolution."

The President has repeatedly denied the allegations, calling Rotundo "a blackmailer and extortionist."

Menem also criticized "some sectors" of the press for publishing his former aide's accusations. The President admitted he met Qadhafi during a meeting of Third World political parties in 1982. "That's all, and that's no reason to make this a real circus out of it," he concluded.

Value-Added Tax To Be Raised 2 Percent 1 Mar

PY2802222692 Buenos Aires BUENOS AIRES
HERALD in English 28 Feb 92 pp 1, 5

[Text] (DYN-NA)—The IVA value-added tax will be raised to 18 percent, up from the current rate of 16 percent, as from March 1, Economy Minister Domingo Cavallo announced yesterday.

He added that the IVA hike is necessary to offset the loss in government revenue brought about by this week's reduction in the cheque tax from 1.2 to 0.3 percent, a planned reduction in the assets tax, and the proposed IEPE primary surplus tax.

Sources at the Economy Ministry said Cavallo decided to proceed with the IVA hike after seeing the changes made by the Lower House's Budget Commission to the

IEPE bill. Cavallo concluded these changes would lower government revenue and endanger fiscal targets in the 1992 budget.

Cavallo admitted that the IVA hike may result in price markups, although he said these would be minimal. "If price rises are brought about by the implementation of taxes, this is not inflation," Cavallo told journalists.

The hike will in the long run have a deflationary effect, the minister said, because of the proportionate rise in government income due to the tax. The two percent hike should bring in additional monthly 100 million dollars for the Treasury, Cavallo said.

Cavallo reacted angrily when asked about the strange goings-on at the National Mint, which include the printing of notes bearing the effigy of President Carlos Menem, and the disappearance of twenty-one sheets of unnumbered and unsigned 500,000 australs (50 peso) bills. "These are just rumours with which somebody is trying to confuse public opinion," Cavallo said. "The so-called Menemtruchos are not a relevant subject," Cavallo concluded.

Pressure Against Tax Reform Said Building

PY0203034492 Buenos Aires *BUENOS AIRES HERALD* in English 29 Feb 92 p 5

[Text] (NA)—Pressure seemed to be building underneath the government's projected tax reform yesterday, with farm leaders talking of a "tax rebellion" and the Buenos Aires Stock Exchange saying the proposed tax bill would "discourage the repatriation of capital and local investment in corporate debt."

Government tax hounds meanwhile swooped down on the Plaza Hotel, a Havanna Alfajores outlet in Mar del Plata and the insurance cooperative La Unica, continuing to pick their victims for maximum media effect.

La Unica had filed for bankruptcy but the cooperative's managers were arrested on alleged charges of a four million dollar fiscal fraud.

Farm leader Arturo Navarro, of the traditionally outspoken CRA [Argentine Rural Confederations], said that farmers "won't be able to pay" existing taxes, such as the land tax—much less the new taxes foreseen by the fiscal reform.

The CRA is already lobbying legislators to vote against the IEPE [expansion unknown], Navarro said, while roundly rejecting the two percent increase in the IVA value-added tax.

Former CRA president Benito Legeren joined the IEPE fray with suggestions of his own for changes to the tax bill. "The IEPE as it stands fails to apply the valuable concept of not taxing productive investment," he said.

In Mar del Plata, a branch of the firm Alfajores Havanna was closed down for 24 hours on Wednesday [26 February] night by the DGI [General Directorate of Taxation] tax bureau. The DGI closed the store when shop employees failed to issue a purchasing invoice to a DGI official who purchased goods at the branch. The Havanna company published an ad in local newspapers protesting the forced closure which ended on Thursday night.

Here in Buenos Aires, the Plaza Hotel was raided on Wednesday by Federal Police and ANSES pension fund inspectors, who allegedly unearthed evidence of irregularities in pension fund payments. In a press communique yesterday, the Labour Ministry said the raid was ordered due to a report on the alleged forgery of pension fund payment slips. The raid allegedly turned up evidence of forgery—amounting to 100,000 pesos on a single slip, the communique concluded.

CIS Trawler Charged With Illegal Fishing

PY0203142492 Buenos Aires *NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS* in Spanish 1219 GMT 2 Mar 92

[Text] Bahia Blanca, 2 Mar (NA)—The trawler Sergey Kadanchik of the CIS (the former Soviet Union), which was arrested by the Argentine patrol vessel Thompson while illegally fishing in Argentine jurisdictional waters, has arrived and docked at the port of Ingeniero White.

The CIS ship will be held under the jurisdiction of the Coast Guard, which is conducting an investigation against the ship for entering Argentine waters near the Valdez peninsula and for keeping 400 metric tons of processed squid in its hold.

The CIS ship, with a crew of 76, was first spotted by a fighter plane, which gave its position to the patrol vessel Thompson, which in turn proceeded to arrest it on 1 March and escort it to the local port.

The CIS ship captain now will have to explain to a federal court the reasons for his unauthorized entry into Argentine waters. A stiff fine and the confiscation of its catch are among the possible sanctions.

Brazil

Dereliction of Duty Denied in Magri Case

PY0203191592 Rio de Janeiro *Rede Globo Television* in Portuguese 1600 GMT 2 Mar 92

[Excerpt] Justice Minister Jarbas Passarinho has stated that he is not responsible for any dereliction of duty in the case of the charges brought against former Labor Minister Antonio Magri.

Passarinho said that former INSS [National Social Security Institute] Director Volnei Avila did not submit any evidence to substantiate the charges he leveled with the government.

[Begin Passarinho recording] Those who are hoping to charge me with dereliction of duty will be deeply disappointed. At no time did I admit—and my remarks are recorded—that I knew about the charges were being leveled at Magri. I did not know. I sincerely did not know. I only knew that Volnei was making serious charges concerning social security. [end recording] [passage omitted]

INSS President Gasparin Released; Bail Paid

PY0203150492 *Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 1000 GMT 2 Mar 92*

[Text] INSS [National Social Security Institute] President Cesar Gasparin, who had been detained in Brasilia, has been released. He remained at the Federal Police Superintendency for 46 hours.

[Begin relay by Claudia Moreira] INSS attorneys paid two bails in Maranhao State and Sao Paulo State and obtained a writ of habeas corpus from the Rio de Janeiro Court.

Cesar Gasparin said that society will judge if his imprisonment did or did not represent a violence.

[Begin Gasparin recording] I am a public servant; I am playing my role. I am discharging my duties, and the Brazilian society must judge if that does or does not represent a violence. [end recording]

The INSS president will not travel to Curitiba, where his family lives, today. Instead, Cesar Gasparin will go to Brasilia to work normally today. [end relay]

U.S. Bank Negotiations 'Will Be Difficult'

PY0203141292 *Brasilia Radio Nacional da Amazonia Network in Portuguese 1000 GMT 2 Mar 92*

[Text] The Brazilian debt renegotiations with U.S. banks will begin this week. This information was supplied by Economy Minister Marcilio Marques Moreira. He admitted that the talks will be difficult because Brazil wants a discount of about 35 percent.

The economy minister denied that the renegotiations to reschedule the debt with the Paris Club were conducted in disagreement with the Brazilian Government's intentions.

Colombia

Barranquilla Airport Radar System Destroyed

PA0303044892 *Santa Fe de Bogota Inravisión Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 3 Mar 92*

[Text] The Simon Bolivar National Guerrilla Coordinating Board [CNGSB] has blown up the radar guidance system at the Barranquilla Airport. The airport will now be able to operate during daytime and under good visibility conditions.

The CNGSB claimed responsibility for the attack that destroyed the radar system necessary for night navigation at the Ernesto Cortizo International Airport.

The radar system in the Pueblo Nuevo Atlantico Municipality provides communication and night signals for nearly all of the airports along the Atlantic coast. These airports will now only be able to operate under absolutely clear daylight.

Civil Aviation experts reached by this station said it will take at least one month to reestablish the system.

Peru

Controversy Develops Over Agrarian Law Issue

PY0303034692 *Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 18 Feb 92 p A7*

[Excerpt] President Alberto Fujimori's recent announcement that he will not enforce the Agricultural Emergency Law has caused a new confrontation between the executive and legislative powers. Senate President Felipe Osterling (PPC) [Popular Christian Party] yesterday practically gave an ultimatum to the president to enforce the emergency law without delay by reminding him that as president, he has an obligation "to enforce the laws approved by Congress in compliance with the Constitution."

Osterling also said that if the executive branch believes there are not enough funds to enforce the law—about \$300 million—the logical thing would be to call for an extraordinary session of Congress to study ways of finding a solution because a congressional call is out of the question due to the time it will take to get the necessary support from two-thirds of the deputies and senators. [passage omitted]

'Serious Problems' Possible

PY0203132892 *Lima EXPRESO in Spanish 18 Feb 92 p A7*

[Excerpt] Prominent lawyers on 17 February stated that despite the fact that the president's remarks on the controversial law on the agrarian emergency are regarded as valid, there would be serious problems if he decides not to apply it. They hinted at the possibility that this situation could make Congress question and reproach the cabinet, a fact that may cause a reshuffle, or charge the president with violating the Constitution.

Independent Senator Raul Ferrero Costa advocated this position and regretted the attitude of the president, who, he said, should be aware of the Constitution's terms. Ferrero said: "This attitude puts the democratic system's legality at stake because the president should not only apply what he deems appropriate and reject what he disapproves."

Ferrero, an independent lawmaker and former dean of the Lima Bar Association, said that if President Fujimori

lacks the necessary financing to implement the law, he has several alternatives to solve the situation, but in no case can he fail to apply the law.

Ferrero said: "One of the alternatives is to submit an alternative project, as he has already done; to call for a special congressional session to discuss a specific agenda on the issue; and the third alternative—if he regards the law as unconstitutional—is to file a petition for amparo with the Court for Constitutional Guarantees. He also could adopt emergency measures and maintain the law as a pending issue, but he should not fail to implement it because this is not right."

Ferrero said that if the president maintains his position, he could be charged with violating the Constitution as established in Article 183. The Constitution provides that he is compelled to "observe it and to make the Constitution, the treaties, the laws, and other legal regulations be complied with." [passage omitted]

APRA Congress Elects New Executive Board

PY0203222992 Lima LA REPUBLICA in Spanish
18 Feb 92 p 10

[Summary] The 8th National Congress of the American Popular Revolutionary Revolutionary Alliance, APRA, ended during the morning of 18 February. During this congress the new APRA executive board was elected. It comprises:

Secretary General Alan Garcia Perez; Deputy Secretary General Mercedes Cabanillas Bustamante; Organization Secretary Agustin Mantilla; Interior Secretary Noemi Flores; Ethics and Discipline Secretary Jorge Idiaquez; Unions Secretary Ruben Fuentes; Agrarian Groups Secretary Arturo Alegria; Professional Groups Secretary Javier Salirrosas; Cooperatives Secretary Said Trujillo; Enrique Tello, National Discipline Committee; Rodolfo Sachun, Finances Committee; Abel Salinas, Planning Committee; Lucio Valverde, National Ecology Committee; Wilmer Ramos, Municipal Administrations National Committee; Julio Calderon, Autonomous Electoral Committee; Homero Burgos, National Committee for Social Development; Carlos Pacheco, Regional Administration National Committee; Julio Cesar Guevara, National Press Committee; Vitaliano Gallardo, Technical Electoral Secretariat; Otilia Polay, Women's Organizations Secretariat.

Polay's election is somewhat surprising because she is the sister of Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement, MRTA, leader Victor Polay.

Privatization Process' 'First Effective Step'

PY0203132092 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish
18 Feb 92 p A3

[Excerpt] The appointment of the first 19 special committees in various state-owned enterprises is believed to be the first effective step toward their privatization.

This occurs less than six months after the Law on the Promotion of Private Investment in State-owned Enterprises (Decree No. 674) was promulgated on 25 September 1991.

These special committees will have to quickly draft the privatization project and submit it to the Commission for the Promotion of Private Investment [Copri] headed by Mines and Energy Minister Jaime Yoshiyama.

Sources close to the Energy and Mines Ministry on 17 February stated that this will be the prerequisite to put the enterprise on sale in the stock market, through negotiations or auction.

The Copri will evaluate and approve the proposals submitted by the special committees so the privatization process can be assured.

These committees will outline the system for the implementation of private investment that was agreed upon, the scheme for evaluating the assets, and the deadline and schedule for the privatization process.

They also will promote, organize, and supervise the privatization, and will propose to the Copri the amount that each enterprise will have to allocate to finance the privatization process. [passage omitted]

Uruguay

Leftist Parties, Unions Foresee Conflicts

PY2802180692 Madrid EFE in Spanish
1616 GMT 28 Feb 92

[Report by Juan Antonio de Lucas]

[Text] Montevideo, 28 Feb (EFE)—Leftist parties and trade union organizations today announced that labor conflicts will increase in Uruguay after the new adjustment measures decided on by the government.

A spokesman for the communist-led PIT-CNT [Inter-union Workers Plenum-National Convention of Workers] trade union organization stressed today that the speech that the new economy minister, Ignacio de Posadas, delivered last night "does not augur anything good" because his economic measures "once again drop the burden of the crisis on the workers." The sources confirmed that on 10 March 1992 the trade union organization's assembly will review the possibility of calling another national strike day to protest the salary adjustments and privatizations.

In a speech over radio and television on 27 February, Ignacio de Posadas, who became economy minister three weeks ago, warned the population that "it will be necessary to make new sacrifices to overcome the critical situation the country is experiencing." The state has been chronically deficit-ridden because it spends much more than what it produces, said the minister, who announced an increase in the tax burden, the third fiscal

adjustment in the two year old, center-right government of President Luis Alberto Lacalle. The economy minister held the social security system responsible for the state's huge losses. He said that a partial privatization of the social security system will be conducted.

In Uruguay, where there are 3 million inhabitants, there is one retiree (650,000 retirees in total) for every two workers (1.2 million workers in total). People older than 60 represent 16.2 percent of the total population, compared with an average 6.9 percent in Latin America as a whole.

The new economy minister warned that public servants, who represent 22 percent of national employment, will experience a drop in their salaries with increases below the inflation rate. Concerning the private sector, the policy of automatic price and salaries adjustments, a long-standing tradition in Uruguay, also will end. The negotiations to increase salaries will henceforth be conducted in each company and not at the trade union level.

The PIT-CNT, supported by the leftist coalition Broad Front, the country's third largest political force with 20 percent of the votes, is radically opposed to these measures. Broad Front Deputy Hugo Cores today said: "The economy minister repeated the old topics of the neoliberal right discourse."

On 17 and 18 December 1991, Uruguay experienced a 36 hour general strike, the longest one since the reinstatement of democracy in 1985, to protest privatizations and "the government's arrogance concerning labor issues." The Broad Front also launched a campaign to collect signatures in order to force the government to call a referendum on the public-company privatization process, for which it requires a minimum of 600,000 signatures.

After achieving congressional approval for its bill, the government announced that in the course of this year it will complete the partial privatization process of the state-owned airline PLUNA [Uruguayan National Airlines], the telephone company ANTEL [National Telecommunications Administration], and many secondary public services.

Privatization To Be Implemented 'Immediately'

PY0303033892 Montevideo EL PAIS in Spanish
26 Feb 92 p 7

[Text] The government has decided to immediately implement a privatization program that will include the ports owned by the Agriculture and Livestock Ministry in Paysandu, Fray Bentos, and Nueva Palmira; various airports in the interior of the country, including the Laguna del Sauce airport in Punta del Este; airline services linking the interior of the country through TAMU [Uruguayan Military Air Transportation Service]; ambulance, laundry, and food processing services at hospitals; the sale of a Navy oil tanker; and the National Printing House, among others.

This announcement was made on 25 February by Agriculture Minister Alvaro Ramos, who was the spokesman appointed by the Council of Ministers, which met at Libertad building for over two hours.

Ramos stated that during the meeting, which was similar to one held two months ago, each ministry submitted a privatization program for services that are nonessential for the state. He noted that they can be privatized through a decree, in keeping with Article 2 of the Public Enterprises Law.

Ramos explained that each ministry delivered a proposed schedule to the Planning and Budget Office, adding that some institutions could be quickly privatized while other privatizations could be delayed because of negotiations that must be carried out.

The executive branch thus seeks to reduce public expenditures, provide more efficient service to the people, and make better use of investments, which will be allocated to other priorities.

Ramos said privatizations will be intensified during the second half of 1992. As for the Agriculture Ministry, he said that silos will be included in the second stage of privatization. He believes that the specifications for privatization of the ports of Paysandu, Fray Bentos, and Nueva Palmira will be ready within two months and the privatization process will be completed in five months with the appropriate sale.

Venezuela

Troops Confined to Garrisons After Weapons Theft

PA0203231292 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish
2203 GMT 2 Mar 92

[Text] Caracas, 2 Mar (NOTIMEX)—Venezuelan military authorities have ordered troops confined to their garrisons after weapons were stolen from the Defense Ministry. Calm was reported in the principal military units of the country on 2 March.

The Military Intelligence Directorate in Caracas is investigating the theft of 40 rifles, submachine guns, and ammunition, carried out on 1 March by Lieutenant Raul Alvarez and four other unidentified men.

The incident, in which Alvarez and his men overpowered guards in Tiuna Fort, site of the Defense Ministry, prompted the confinement order in Caracas and other principal cities of the country, military and media sources reported.

Defense Minister Fernando Ochoa, whose home is in Tiuna Fort, has not issued a statement.

Local radio stations and military sources said special units of the Judicial Technical Political and Political Police have also been confined to their garrisons. While visiting military units in Maracaibo, the country's

second most important city, the second general commander acknowledged the Armed Forces have been confined to their garrisons since the night of 1 March.

Military vehicles are patrolling the principle avenues. A joint police-military operation has been under way since last week in view of Carnival festivities, a newswoman for Maracaibo's CRITICA newspaper stated.

Visits to the 1st Infantry Division Headquarters, the National Guard Regional Command, and the Rafael Urdaneta Air Base are "routine," according to a source who declined to comment on the attack. The inspection included the Libertador Garrison, one of the cells of the 4 February abortive coup.

Reports from Valencia, 158 km west of Caracas, noted no abnormal movements in Iparamacay Fort—another site of the abortive coup.

Prior to this, Jose Rafael Huiza, spokesperson for the Defense Ministry, denied Alvarez had participated in the abortive coup. He did not dismiss alleged ties with the "Bolivarian Movement," which supported the rebels.

In the Miraflores Government Palace an economic cabinet session was held, military security was discreet, and traffic was normal along the surrounding avenues.

'Unusual Military Movements' Reported at Airports

PA0303012692 Paris AFP in Spanish 0044 GMT
3 Mar 92

[Excerpt] Caracas, 2 Mar (AFP)—Press sources in Caracas on 2 March reported unusual military movements were observed at several Venezuelan airports. Radio Rumbos Network reported soldiers have heightened surveillance of landing strips at Cumana airport, 350 km east of Caracas. Eyewitnesses reported that the Jose Antonio Anzoategui Airport in Barcelona, a resort city in eastern Venezuela, was also occupied by members of the Air Force on 2 March.

Military spokespersons said the observed military surveillance is part of a government operation related to Carnival festivities. Reporters in Barcelona told AFP the Carnival operation was launched on 28 February and the unusual military deployment was observed on 2 March. [passage omitted]

Party Issues 'Immediate' Call for Referendum

PA0303033592 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0050 GMT
3 Mar 92

[Text] Caracas, 2 Mar (EFE)—The "R Cause" Party on 2 March issued an "immediate" call for a referendum so that the people can decide Venezuela's destiny as the only democratic, legal, and peaceful solution.

According to local analysts, "R Cause," which controls the state of Bolivar, seat of Venezuela's heavy industry, has been dominant because of its humble origin and the honesty of its leaders who defend the people's interests.

This political party, which was fifth in the number of votes garnered in the last general elections, does not want President Carlos Andres Perez' to resign, as several sectors of the country have proposed. It considers such a move to represent a "solution behind the people's back."

Also, according to a press note, that alternative "would be handled by a Congress as irresponsible as the president."

On the possibility of creating a constituent assembly, "R Cause" notes that it would take several months to create a constituent assembly, whereas immediate solutions are demanded.

"The core of the crisis," the note added, "does not lie in the national Constitution, but on the catastrophic role the political class has played and continues to play through the Congress, the parties, and institutions that have dominated the political scene."

According to this party, the referendum "paves the way for the people to have direct participation in order to have a different government, with a face-the-people policy."

Finally, the note, signed by Pablo Medina, "R Cause" secretary general, says that the plebiscite must be held now with guarantees to prevent "history from repeating itself and people from being deceived and manipulated by the political mismanagement that has led the country to this situation."

Coup Leader Chavez Predicts New Uprising

PA0203234092 Hamburg DPA in Spanish 1612 GMT
2 Mar 92

[Text] Caracas, 2 Mar (DPA)—Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Chavez, leader of the failed February coup in which approximately 80 people died, denied during an interview that the coupists wanted to murder President Carlos Andres Perez.

Chavez' statements were published on 2 March in EL NACIONAL. In his statements, made at the military prison at the San Carlos Garrison in Caracas, Chavez predicted a new uprising against the government and said the work started by the coupists should be finished by the people. He said it was the beginning of a struggle "and the people's mission is to continue. The pots can already be heard."

The officer will be given a military trial together with 100 comrades-in-arms accused of participating in the foiled coup d'etat.

According to Chavez, the rebels never intended to murder the president on 4 February. Such an action would have been "treason to the fatherland," Chavez said. "We have been called all sorts of things: neo-fascists, murderers, seditious; it has even been said we were going to kill the president and his family." Chavez said while denying accusations made by the chief of state himself shortly after the coup attempt.

"We had the president 1.5 meters away at the presidential palace, and he was not shot because the order was to arrest, not kill him. Later, when he was leaving, he was only a few meters away from us. We could have stopped him by blowing up the car, but that would have killed him and that was not the mission. That would have been treason to the fatherland," said Chavez.

The interview in EL NACIONAL newspaper was published together with photographs of the site where the officer had been arrested. In the photographs, Chavez appears together with his relatives and other accused military officers.

According to the officer, the plan was to detain President Carlos Andres Perez and take over power to install a "nationalist and Bolivarian" government. "After capturing the president and taking over power, the people themselves would be responsible for judging the corrupt in a people's court," Chavez noted.

"We had planned to summon the honest jurists and people of this nation to join us to establish a nationalist government, without a leftist or rightist definition, only that they be nationalists and Bolivarian," he added.

According to the military, Perez has deceived the international media regarding his status as a democratic leader, while he accused him of delivering a two-sided speech "full of demagoguery."

"He has fooled everyone abroad, but here he cannot fool anyone anymore," Chavez stated.

According to Chavez, the only real broad political participation was during the February 1989 "el Caracazo" revolt, against Perez's economic program. Unofficial reports cited over 1,000 deaths in that revolt.

"At that time the Armed Forces repressed the people who were demanding their rights. The Armed Forces were transformed into praetorian guards; guards of the oligarchy and of the clique-rulers [cogolocracia]," Chavez said. That is how the party system is derogatorily referred to in Venezuela.

Political Analysts Say 'Civilian Coup' Possible

PA0203231392 Paris AFP in Spanish 0956 GMT
2 Mar 92

[By Tamara Rodriguez S.]

[Text] Caracas, 2 Mar (AFP)—Political commentators and analysts agree that following the abortive coup on 4 February, a civilian coup could be in the offing against ranking officials, political leaders, and economic leaders who are viewed as responsible, together with President Carlos Andres Perez, for the profound Venezuelan crisis.

Arturo Usler Pietri, a journalist who received the Prince of Asturias award, believes that the president's resignation is the only option "of supreme unselfishness and patriotism" that might change the situation to find

solutions "to this very grave crisis that is threatening not only the political stability of the nation, but future possibilities as well."

Leaders of the opposition Copei [Social Christian Party] have asked that Perez resign, that a referendum be held, and that a constituent assembly be convened.

A commission was formed, headed by former Christian Democratic President Rafael Caldera (1979-84), to study reforms to the existing Constitution (1961) with a view toward including the constituent body.

The Movement Toward Socialism (MAS), the second opposition force, has also requested that Perez resign "to safeguard democracy," that the December 1993 elections be moved up, and that a constituent assembly be convened.

Teodoro Petkoff, former MAS presidential candidate, said that a pardon for the coupists—for which a committee has been formed and 20,000 signatures have been obtained—would be a political way out.

"At this moment, when the president's resignation is being requested, a military revolt appears more clearly as an expression and symptom of the big political crisis that prevails in the country," the politician stated.

He added that the government cannot indict the (coupist) military, when it has permitted Former President Jaime Lusinchi (1979-84) and Blanca Ibanez, his wife and former private secretary, to go free.

"It is truly unacceptable to permit those who engage in corruption to be free while condemning the coupist military, as has been the case in the national political crisis," Petkoff concluded.

The leftist Radical Cause has demanded a referendum on the presidential mandate and also wants the elections to be moved up. The ruling Democratic Action Party is the only party that has come out against the president's resigning, considering it unconstitutional, among other things.

According to some analysts, the military coup has turned Venezuela into a political forum, where even the most indifferent are being taken up. "Most alarming (although it could well become the most hopeful) is that the military has sparked something of a civilian coup, with less unrest and dead than on 27 February (the "Caracazo" which left 400 dead in 1989), but with more built-up resentment...the military move has become a civilian ultimatum" Luis Ugalde, Jesuit and university professor, has written in EL DIARIO DE CARACAS.

Last 27 February, the third anniversary of the Caracazo was commemorated with an unusual night of pot-banging, while the police had their hands full controlling attempted looting and disturbances in the poorest sectors of the capital.

Leaflets were handed out calling for all Caracas residents to unite in a cry of protest on 10 March at 2200.

Perez claims, however, that he will remain at his post until the end of his constitutional term on 2 February 1994. He said that those who want him to resign "are attempting, by other means, what was not achieved by force in the predawn hours of 4 February when an attempt was made to assassinate him or place him under arrest."

For some observers, it is worrisome that during Carnival festivities, which conclude on Tuesday, an Army of small "Chavez" impersonators dressed in the paratrooper uniform of coupist leader Lieutenant Colonel Hugo Chavez Frias, have taken over the Caracas streets, while the walls have been painted with the word "viva" for the coupist leader who attempted to unseat Perez.